Mar 30, 2024

TechLife NEWS

AI INDUSTRY BIG GAME

APPLE, NVIDIA, AND COMPETITORS BATTLING FOR DOMINANCE

SOLAR ECLIPSE

TO BE THE BEST YET FOR EXPERIMENTS

EV Auto Show

CHINESE MAKERS CHALLENGING MARKET LEADERS IN BANGKOK

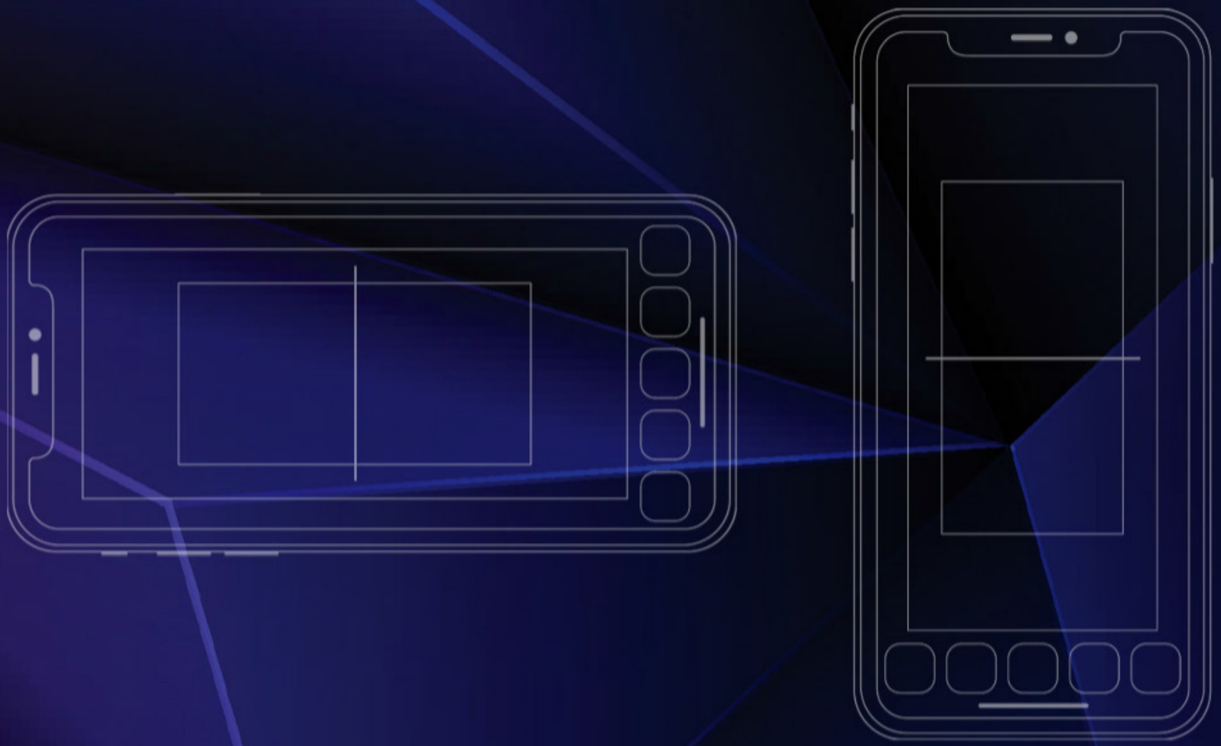
9:41
PhotoArt
photoart.com
Dec 19, 2020
SLR, DSLR
64Mp Tech
After Effects
Elements
Photo &
Graphic
Plugins
the art to create from white to dark, compelling images
Black & White
Single Issue
Subscribe
Home
Previous Editions
Collection
Breaking News
9:41
Fashion
Week
$6.99
Summer - New York
popular aesthetic expression
clothing, footwear, lifestyle, accessories, makeup
trends
Single Issue
Subscribe
Home
Previous Editions
Collection
Breaking News
Share

A fashion week is a fashion industry event, lasting approximately one week, where fashion designers, brands or "houses" display their latest collections in runway fashion shows to buyers and the media. These events influence trends for the current and upcoming seasons. The most prominent fashion weeks are held in the fashion capitals of the world; New York, London, Milan, and Paris, or the "Big Four" which receive the majority of press coverage.

PublishChannel provides the most well-designed app solution to make your publication independent, offering a powerful channel for subscriptions worldwide.

And you keep all revenues directly from App Store™ sales.

Our exclusive design offers a state-of-the-art user interface that is highly interactive with engaging links to web content, video platforms, apps, podcasts, and more. Your app is fully integrated with the production process, seamless in your workflow.



Designed for

Magazines | Newspapers | News Channels | Video Channels

PublishChannel

The World-Class Solution for Publishing

Visit www.publishchannel.com

Luminar 4

Perfect Photo, Sucky Skies?

AI-powered Sky Replacement - Perfection in Seconds

© Sherwin Magsino

Say Goodbye to Bland and Boring Skies

Get Luminar 4, powered by new and innovative technologies like Accent AI and AI Sky Replacement. Instantly replace skies to change the mood of your photo. No complicated masking or brushes required!

Wherever your creative vision takes you, Luminar has the tools, smarts and style to help you achieve your absolute best.
Your Photography. Elevated.

Grab a copy at l.skylum.com/applemag
Use promo code **APPLEMAG** for $10 off your purchase

©2020 Skylum Software USA, Inc. All rights reserved.

SKYLUM Apple Magazine
OFFICIAL PARTNERS

SUMMARY

DEBATE EMERGES OVER WHETHER MODERN PROTECTIONS COULD HAVE SAVED... 06

WISCONSIN SUPREME COURT LETS RULING STAND THAT DECLARED AMAZON... 16

CHINA'S LATEST EV IS A 'CONNECTED' CAR FROM SMART PHONE AND... 26

78,000 MORE PUBLIC WORKERS ARE GETTING STUDENT LOANS CANCELED ... 40

CHINESE EV MAKERS CHALLENGING MARKET LEADERS AT AUTO SHOW IN BANGKOK 48

TRUMP'S SOCIAL MEDIA COMPANY GAINS IN ITS FIRST DAY OF TRADING ON NASDAQ 58

AI RACE - APPLE, NVIDIA, AND COMPETITORS BATTLING FOR INDUSTRY DOMINANCE 68

APPLE ANNOUNCES WORLDWIDE DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE DATES... 90

APRIL'S TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE PROMISES TO BE THE BEST YET FOR EXPERIMENTS 98

ROBOTS REPLICATE REALITY: HIGH-TECH PITCHING MACHINE MIMICS... 108

TIRED OF AI DOOMSDAY TROPES, COHERE CEO SAYS HIS GOAL IS TECHNOLOGY... 118

DUTCH HYPERLOOP CENTER AIMS TO ADVANCE FUTURISTIC TRANSPORT... 128

READY OR NOT, AI CHATBOTS ARE HERE TO HELP WITH GEN Z'S MENTAL... 138

NEW BIPARTISAN BILL WOULD REQUIRE ONLINE IDENTIFICATION, LABELING OF... 152

US PROSECUTORS TRY TO SEND WARNING TO CRYPTOCURRENCY WORLD WITH... 158

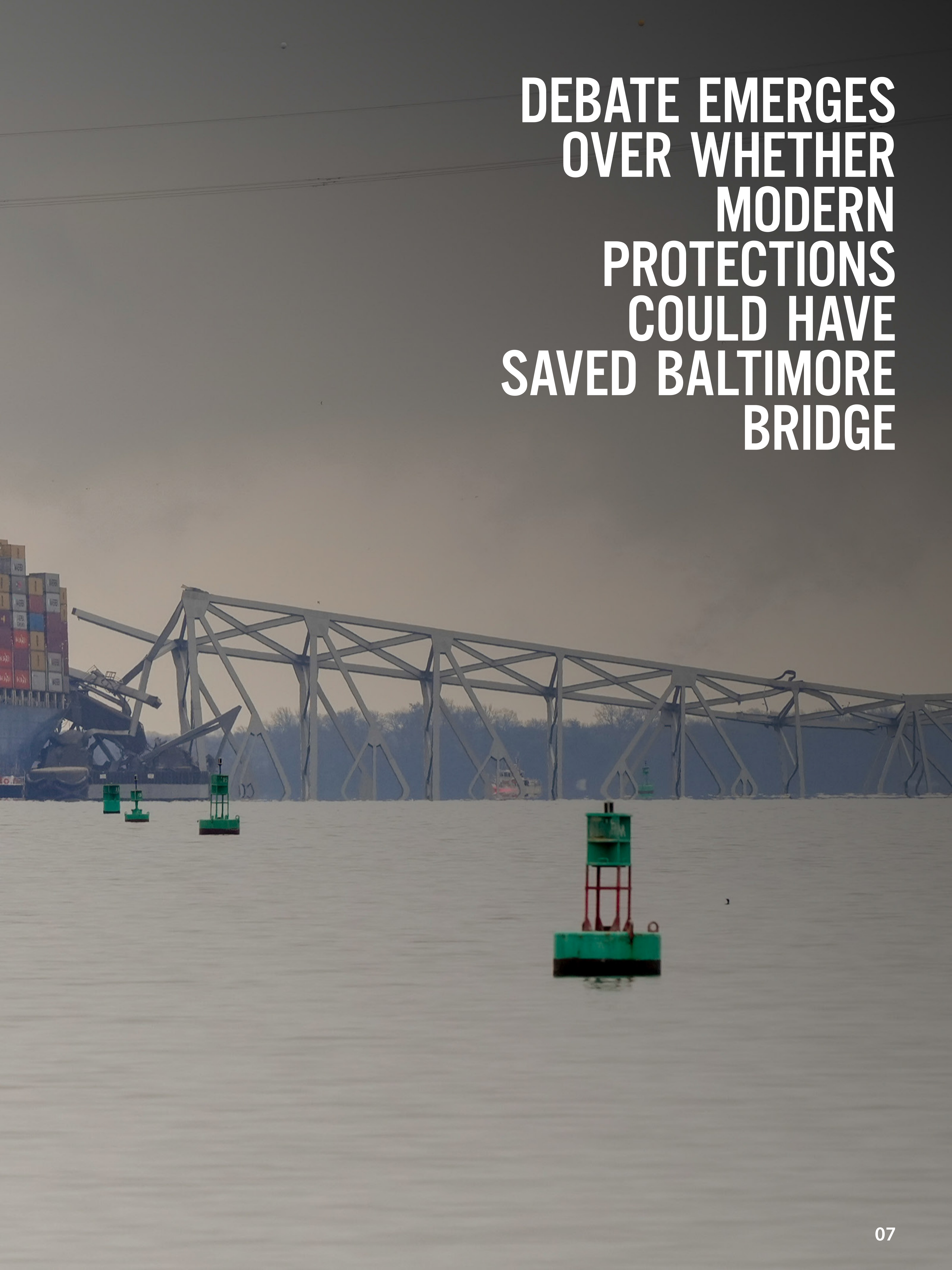
'GHOSTBUSTERS: FROZEN EMPIRE' CLEARS A LOW BAR 166

TIKTOK BILL FACES UNCERTAIN FATE IN THE SENATE AS LEGISLATION TO REGULATE... 178

TIKTOK IS UNDER INVESTIGATION BY THE FTC OVER DATA PRACTICES AND COULD... 192

VISA, MASTERCARD SETTLE LONG-RUNNING ANTITRUST SUIT OVER SWIPE FEES... 198

DALI
SINGAPORE
MARINE EMERGENCY TEAM 21
219
FIRE RESCUE



DEBATE EMERGES OVER WHETHER MODERN PROTECTIONS COULD HAVE SAVED BALTIMORE BRIDGE

When a 900-foot container ship struck the San Francisco–Oakland Bay Bridge in 2007, the span stood firm and no one died, either on the ship or the highway above.

The bridge's supports were protected by a fendering system of concrete and other materials that was installed to absorb such strikes. And it's now prompting the question: Could such a system — or others like it — have saved Baltimore's Francis Scott Key Bridge?

Some experts are saying yes.

Sherif El-Tawil, a University of Michigan engineering professor, said there are several safety measures that "would have made a huge difference" had they been in place Tuesday morning when a cargo ship plowed into the bridge and caused its collapse.

El-Tawil said a fendering system may have softened the 985-foot-long ship's blow. Pilings anchored to the river bottom, known as dolphins, are another measure that could have helped to deflect the container ship Dali. And yet another potential protection would have been islands of rocks or concrete around the bridge's supports.

"It may seem like a very large force," El-Tawil said of the massive cargo ship. "But I think you can design around it, either through a protective system or by designing the bridge itself to have massive towers."

Such protections have become a focal point in the wake of the tragedy, which claimed the lives of six construction workers. Experts say the 47-year-old Key Bridge did not appear to have the protections that are common among newer spans.

The incident is raising questions about how much money American taxpayers are willing to spend to protect against these rare but deadly catastrophes. And not everyone agrees the Key Bridge could have been saved.

"There's a lot of debate taking place among the engineering community about whether any of those features could have had any role in a situation like this," U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said Wednesday at a White House briefing.

"It's difficult to overstate the impact of this collision we're talking about," Buttigieg said. "It's not just as big as a building, it's really as big as a block —- 100,000 tons all going into this pier all at once."

Buttigieg did not directly answer a question about whether steps should be taken to protect the nation's bridges. But the secretary noted that many bridges have been designed to better protect against collisions since a freighter struck Florida's Sunshine Skyway Bridge in 1980, killing 35 people.

Baltimore's Key Bridge opened three years before that disaster in 1977, a time when cargo ships were much smaller in size. In recent years, vessels have grown to carry more containers to save on shipping costs. Ports in Georgia and South Carolina have dredged deeper channels to accommodate them, while part of a bridge was elevated to allow bigger ships to reach New York City-area ports.

The Skyway Bridge disaster in Tampa prompted a paradigm shift in design in the early 1980s, said Mark Luther, a University of South Florida oceanography professor and

director of the USF Center for Maritime and Port Studies.

The new Skyway Bridge was built with rock islands around its main supports and large cylindrical piers on either side of those islands to make it "very difficult for a vessel to strike any part of the bridge and knock it down," Luther said.

"To go back and retrofit a bridge like the Key Bridge with these features would be extremely expensive," Luther said. "And to my knowledge nobody's done it. (They've) just had to accept what risk there is with the construction that was state-of-the art in the '70s."

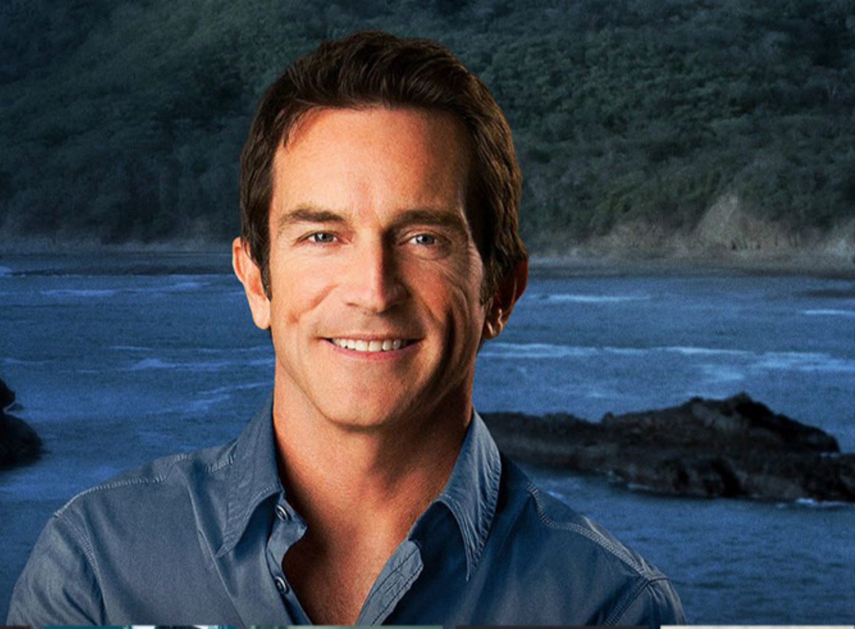
Roberto Leon, a Virginia Tech engineering professor, said the technology exists to protect a bridge against a collision with a massive cargo ship like the Dali.

But he cautioned that governments will always be weighing the costs and the risks. And the protections put in place don't always match up to the size of the disaster, even if the Key bridge was retrofitted with modern safety measures.

"This was an enormous load," he said of the ship that struck the Key Bridge. "If the protection system had been designed for that load. I think it would have protected the bridge. But a big question is: Would you design it for such an enormous load? Because as the load increases, it becomes much more expensive."

PLAY YOUR FAVORITES

Stream more than 15,000 episodes of your favorite daytime, primetime and late night CBS shows, catch up on classic hits or enjoy exclusive CBS All Access Original Series.



NCIS
BIG BROTHER
STAR TREK PICARD
SURVIVOR WINNERS AT WAR
WHAT IS MEMO 618
the good fight
SEAL TEAM
BLUE BLOODS.
FBI
the good fight
young Sheldon

WATCH IT LIVE

Watch live sports, shows and news at home or on-the-go with your local CBS station, CBSN, CBS Sports HQ and ET Live 24/7.

CBS CBSN CBS SPORTS HQ ET LIVE

LIVE TV

CBSN

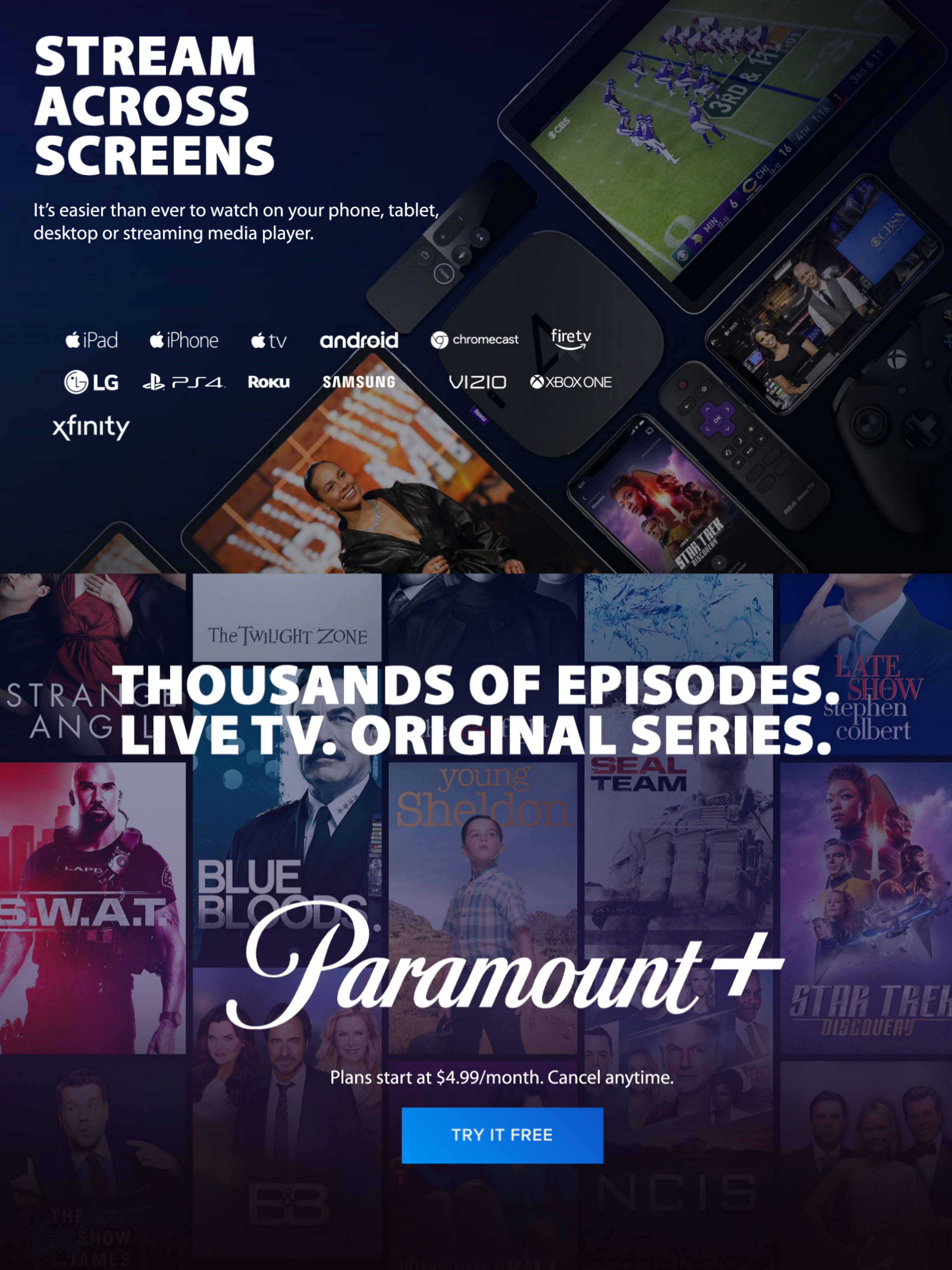
CBS SPORTS HQ

ET LIVE

OBCESS OVER ORIGINALS

Get hooked on critically-acclaimed CBS All Access Original Series.

STAR TREK PICARD
THE THOMAS JOHN EXPERIENCE
WHAT IS MEMO 618
the good fight
INTERROGATION
STAR TREK DISCOVERY
The Twilight Zone
WHY WOMEN KILL


CBS
3RD & 11
MIN
CHI
CBSN
STAR TREK DISCOVERY
The Twilight Zone
Strange Angel
The Good Fight
The Late Show with Stephen Colbert
S.W.A.T.
Blue Bloods
Young Sheldon
SEAL Team
Star Trek Discovery
B&B
NCIS
The Late Late Show James

STREAM ACROSS SCREENS

It's easier than ever to watch on your phone, tablet, desktop or streaming media player.

iPad iPhone tv android chromecast fire tv
LG PS4 Roku SAMSUNG VIZIO XBOX ONE
xfinity

THOUSANDS OF EPISODES. LIVE TV. ORIGINAL SERIES.

Paramount+

Plans start at $4.99/month. Cancel anytime.

TRY IT FREE

WISCONSIN SUPREME COURT LETS RULING STAND THAT DECLARED AMAZON DRIVERS TO BE EMPLOYEES

125
amazon
TRANSIT 250
C71282T

The Wisconsin Supreme Court this week let stand a lower court ruling that declared some delivery drivers for Amazon were employees as the state argued, not independent contractors as the online retail giant contended.

The court, in a unanimous decision, said the appeal was "improvidently granted," meaning the Supreme Court should not have reviewed the case. That decision dismissing the case, issued after the court heard oral arguments, leaves a 2023 Wisconsin appeals court ruling against Amazon in place.

prime
119

That ruling found that drivers in the Amazon Flex program are a part of the state's unemployment insurance system and entitled to jobless pay if they are laid off. The decision means an Amazon subsidiary, Amazon Logistics, will likely be hit with a tax bill of more than $200,000.

Justice Ann Walsh Bradley, in a concurring decision, said the reason the court dismissed the case was that further review "would not serve any meaningful purpose" or any "further development of the law." Justice Rebecca Bradley, in a separate writing, faulted Bradley for trying to explain the court's decision, saying it "will only sow additional confusion."

The case was closely watched for what effect a ruling would have on workers in the "gig economy."

Amazon spokesperson Steve Kelly said the retailer was "disappointed that the Wisconsin Supreme Court declined to weigh in and provide much needed guidance on these matters and are determining our next steps."

Labor unions, along with the state Department of Workforce Development, pushed for the Wisconsin Supreme Court to recognize the Amazon Flex workers as employees.

Stephanie Bloomingdale, president of the Wisconsin AFL-CIO, hailed the court's action, calling it a "win for working people."

"Far too often, especially in the emerging gig economy, big and powerful companies like Amazon use the misclassification of employees as independent contractors to deny working people essential workplace rights like minimum wages, overtime pay, and unemployment insurance," she said.

prim

Courts across the country have been grappling with similar questions as states struggle with how to treat workers who are hired for a particular job, often at the push of a button through a smartphone app, to deliver food, groceries, packages or perform a variety of tasks.

"The gig economy is clogging up the court with all of this stuff, all the time," said Samantha Prince, assistant professor of law at Penn State Dickinson College of Law and an expert on worker misclassification and the gig economy. "It's just nuts. We really need this stuff to be resolved and stay resolved and stop with all the uncertainty for everybody."

Prince said the Wisconsin case "will likely resonate through the other gig company court cases."

"The more cases that find that gig company drivers are employees, the more companies are going to have to pay their rightful share," she said.

Every state has its own laws determining whether workers are employees or independent contractors, Prince said. Those laws set the rules for what wages and overtime the workers must be paid and, in this case, whether they are subject to unemployment benefits that the employer must contribute toward.

Employees who got approved for the Amazon Flex program could download an app for their personal phones showing blocks when they could deliver packages for the company. Workers would scan packages at the Amazon warehouse in Milwaukee and use their personal vehicles to deliver them, using a route suggested by Amazon.

After one Amazon Flex worker was fired, he filed for unemployment insurance. The Department

Frances Perkins
Building
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
United States
Department
of Labor

Image: Andrew Harrer

of Workforce Development conducted an audit of more than 1,000 Amazon Logistics drivers between 2016 and 2018 and concluded the vast majority of drivers were employees, not independent contractors, and therefore eligible for unemployment insurance payments. The state told Amazon in 2018 that it owed more than $205,000 in unemployment insurance premiums.

The Wisconsin Labor and Industry Review Commission upheld the state DWD determination that the drivers were employees. Amazon Logistics sued and a Waukesha County circuit court judge ruled the drivers were independent contractors. Last year, the Wisconsin Court of Appeals overturned that ruling, agreeing with the state that the drivers were employees. That set up the appeal to the Wisconsin Supreme Court.

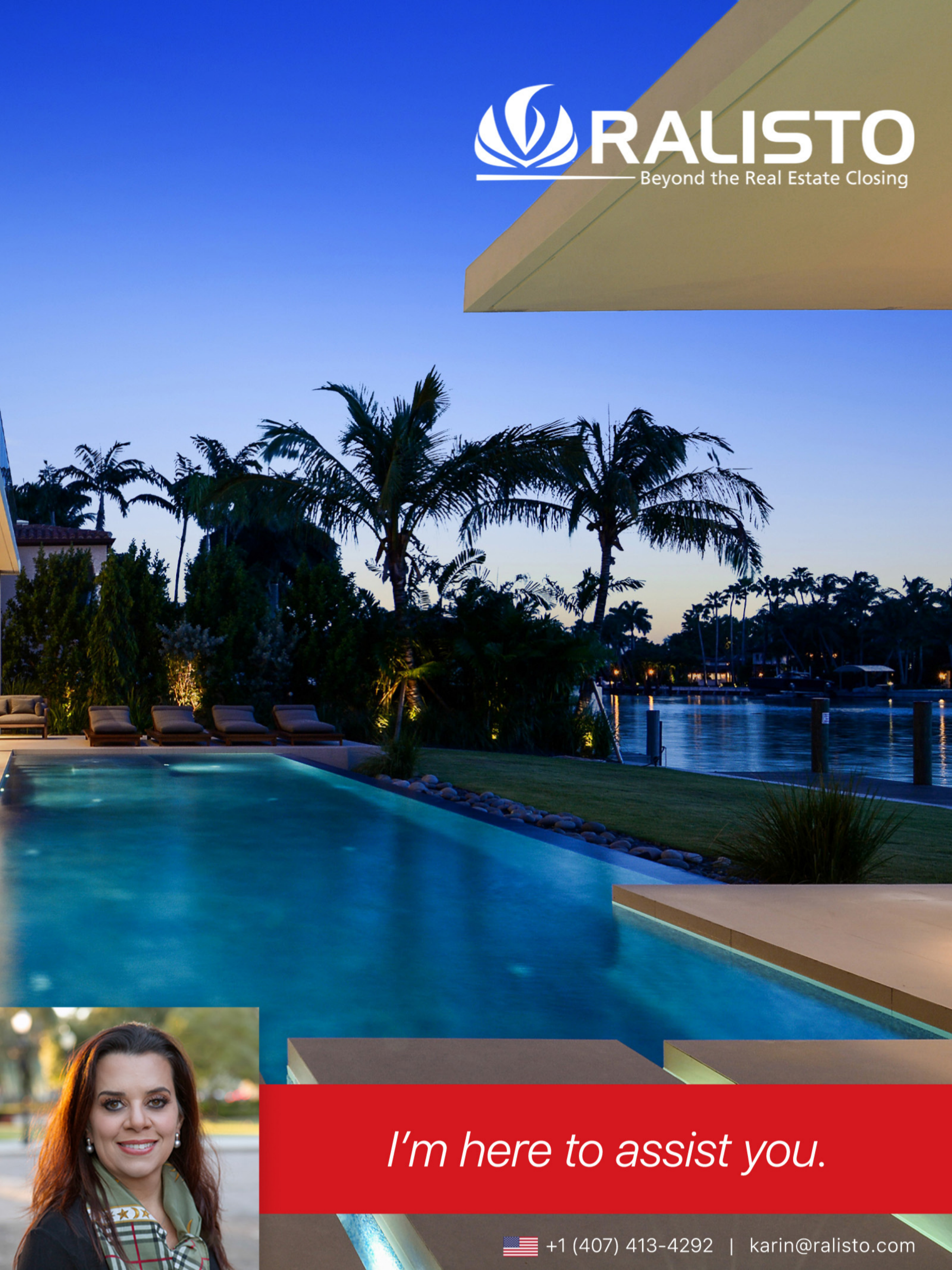
Many other states have looked at the issue.

A Virginia appeals court ruled in 2023 that Amazon Flex drivers were employees, not independent contractors, and ordered Amazon to pay unemployment insurance taxes and penalties.

A California state appeals court last year said app-based ride-hailing and delivery companies like Uber and Lyft can continue to treat their California drivers as independent contractors, allowing them to bypass other state laws requiring worker protections and benefits.

The U.S. Department of Labor enacted a new rule March 11 that aims to prevent the misclassification of workers as “independent contractors,” a step that could bolster both legal protections and compensation for millions in the U.S. workforce. That rule applies to wages and overtime, but not unemployment compensation.

Your Florida dream house can be a lifetime investment.


RALISTO
Beyond the Real Estate Closing
I'm here to assist you.
+1 (407) 413-4292 | karin@ralisto.com

XIAOMI SU7

CHINA'S LATEST EV IS A 'CONNECTED' CAR FROM SMART PHONE AND ELECTRONICS MAKER XIAOMI

Xiaomi, a well-known maker of smart consumer electronics in China, is joining the country's booming but crowded market for electric cars.

The tech company start taking orders for the SU7, a sporty four-door sedan, after a launch event with founder Lei Jun in Beijing. Analysts think it will be priced in the 300,000 yuan ($40,000) range.

Government subsides have helped make China the world's largest market for electric vehicles, and a bevy of new makers are locked in fierce competition. Most of the industry's sales have been domestic, but Chinese makers are pushing into overseas markets with lower-priced models, posing a potential challenge to European, Japanese and American auto giants.

Lei is not bashful about that challenge, saying at an unveiling of the SU7 in December that Beijing-based Xiaomi aims to become one of the world's top five automakers in the next 15 to 20 years.

"I believe that one day, Xiaomi EVs will be a familiar sight on roads around the world," he was quoted as saying in a company news release.

Xiaomi, founded in 2010, is entering an overcrowded market that analysts expect will undergo a shakeout in coming years, with weaker startups falling by the wayside.

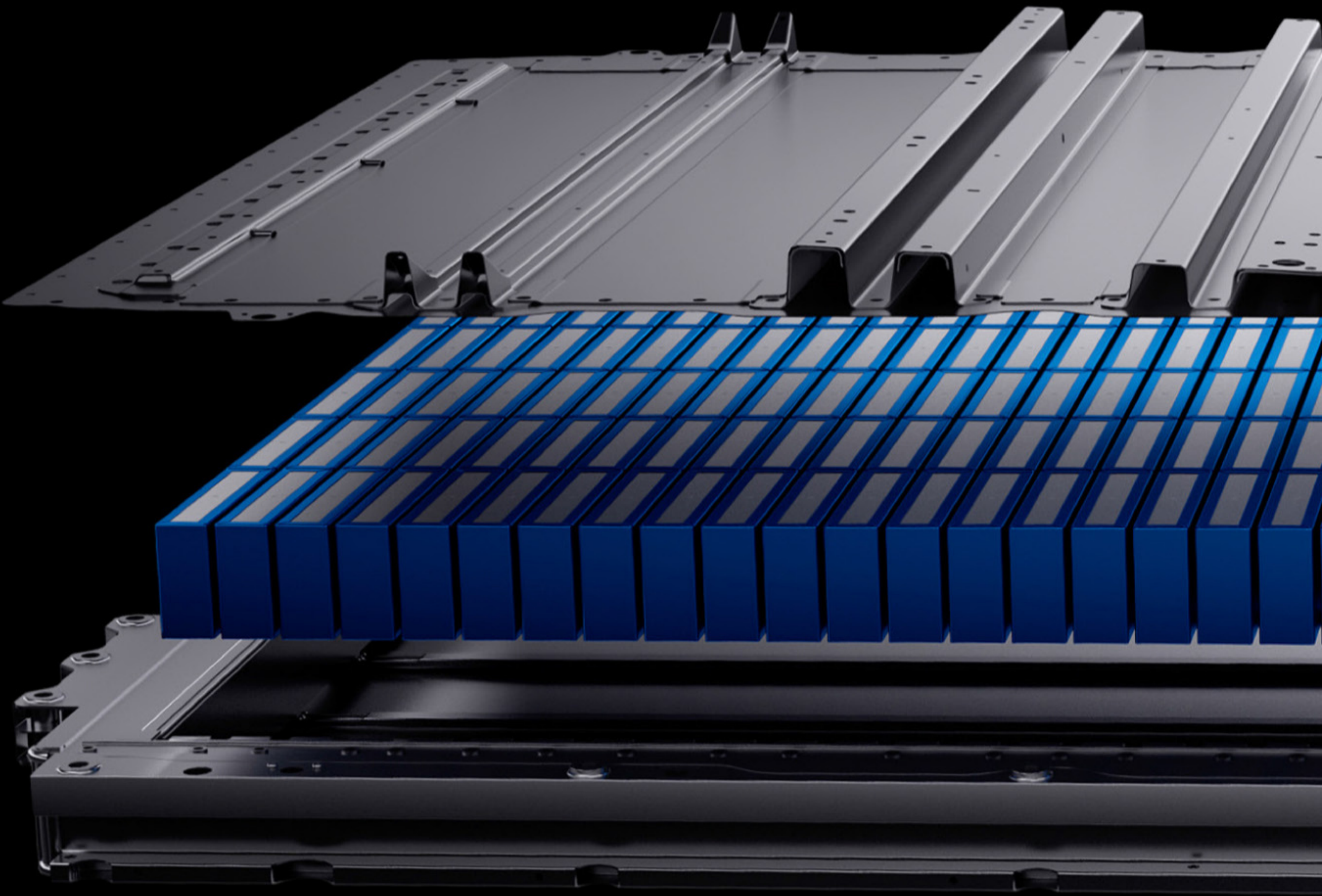
The combined share of EVs and hybrids in China's auto sales is likely to reach 42% to 45% this year, up from 36% in 2023, according to Fitch Ratings. But the agency said in a December report that the competition could put pressure on automakers' short-term market share and profitability.

xiaomi
SU7 Max
SU7

CTB Integrated Ba

120mm
Battery + floor thickness

91
Wiring harnes



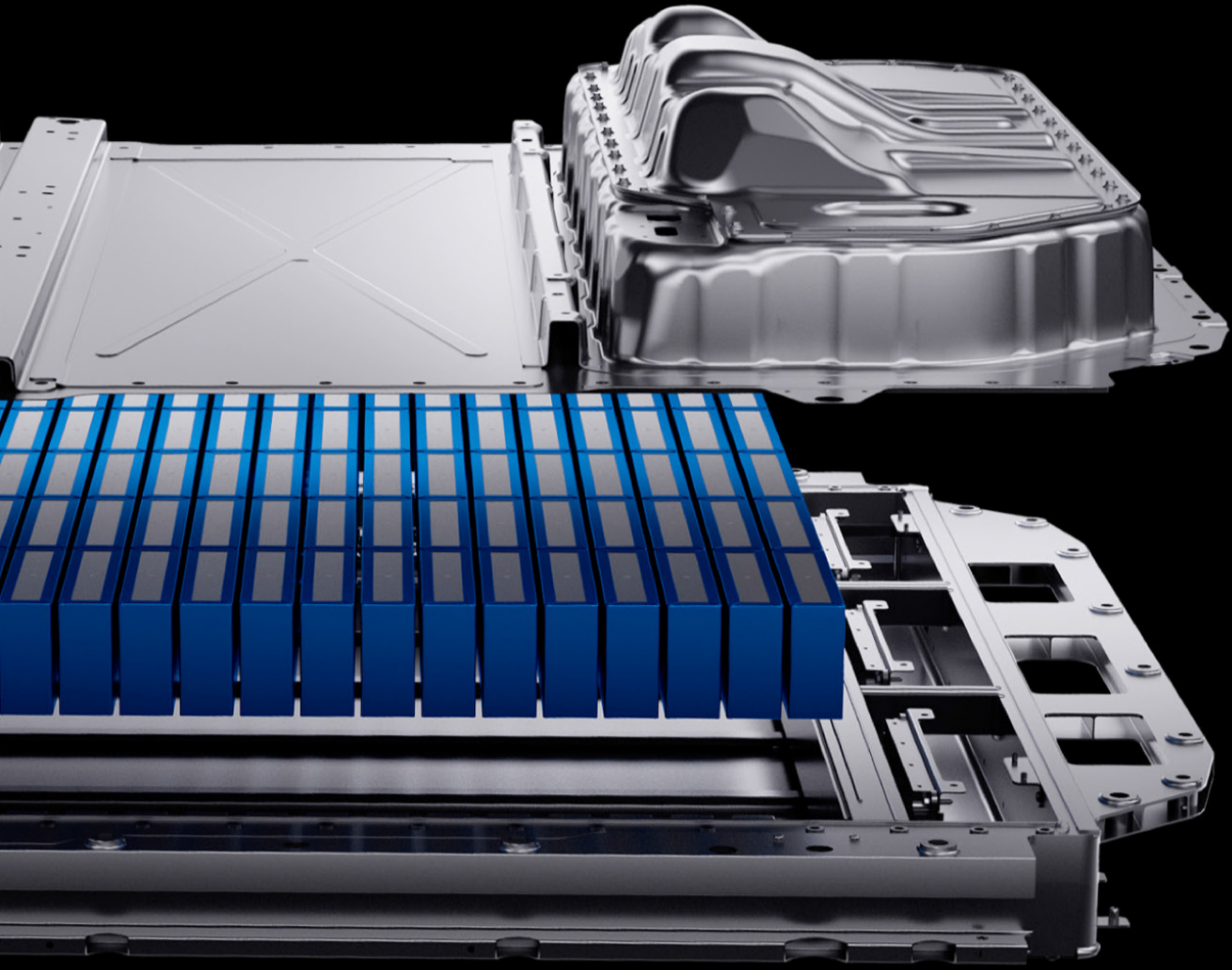
ttery Technology

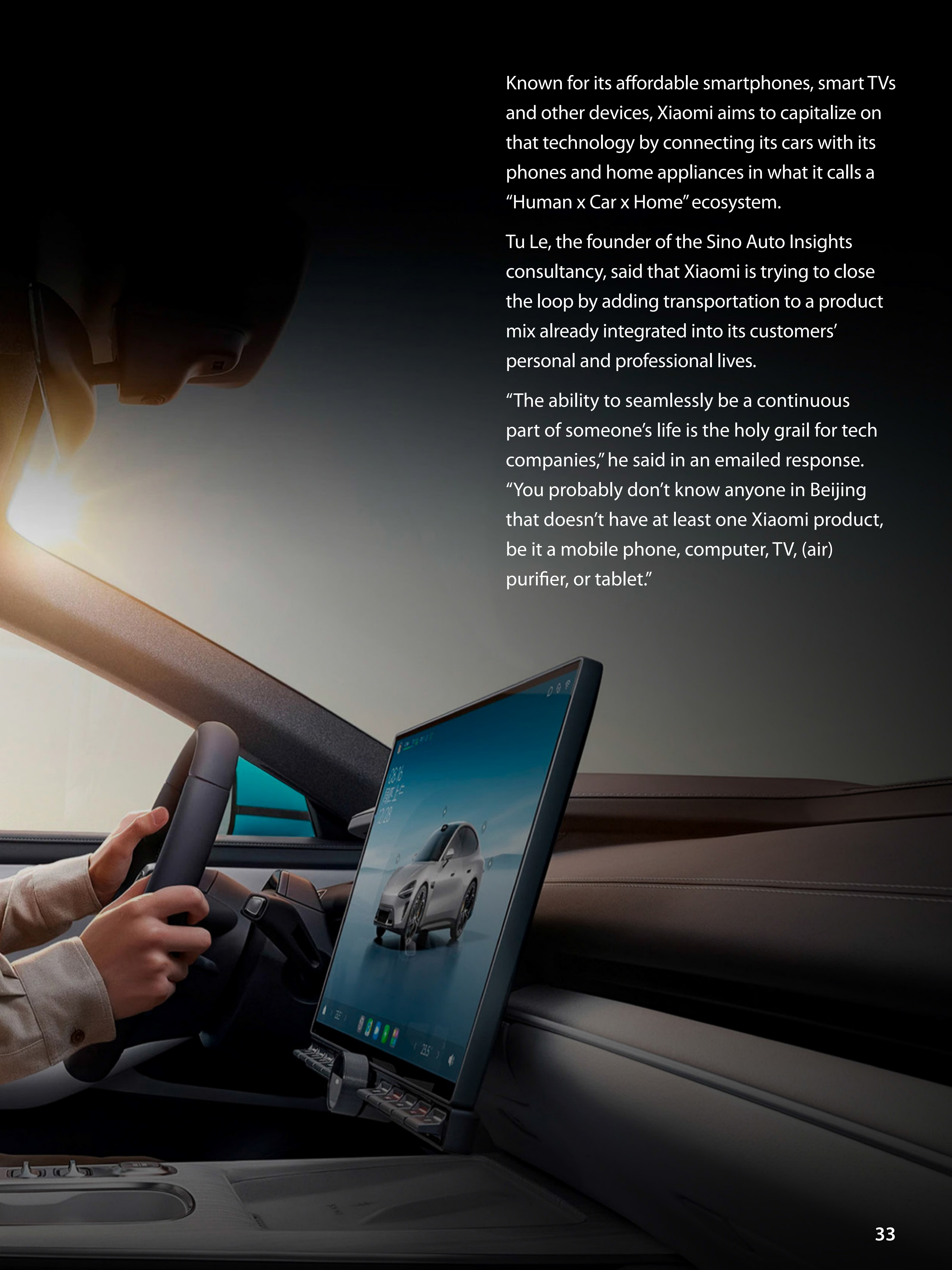
% ↓

s reduced

3% ↓

Space taken up by battery pack reduced





Known for its affordable smartphones, smart TVs and other devices, Xiaomi aims to capitalize on that technology by connecting its cars with its phones and home appliances in what it calls a "Human x Car x Home" ecosystem.

Tu Le, the founder of the Sino Auto Insights consultancy, said that Xiaomi is trying to close the loop by adding transportation to a product mix already integrated into its customers' personal and professional lives.

"The ability to seamlessly be a continuous part of someone's life is the holy grail for tech companies," he said in an emailed response. "You probably don't know anyone in Beijing that doesn't have at least one Xiaomi product, be it a mobile phone, computer, TV, (air) purifier, or tablet."

As a newcomer to automaking, the company is making an educated guess that it can design and develop a car that will sell, he said. Given the sluggish Chinese economy and an ongoing EV price war, he predicted it would take a year or two to see if Xiaomi can adapt to correct any missteps and succeed.

"They are a technology company, so that's their advantage but they need to reconcile that with drinking through a fire hose to learn how to be a tech company that builds cars," Le said.

CreditSights, a financial research firm, said it expects Xiaomi's EV division to sell 60,000 vehicles in its first year and lose money for its first two years because of high marketing and promotion costs.

Chinese automakers trying to expand abroad face political headwinds.

The EU is investigating Chinese subsidies to determine if they give made-in-China EVs an unfair market advantage overseas. The U.S. announced an investigation last month into Chinese-made connected cars that it says could gather sensitive information about their drivers.

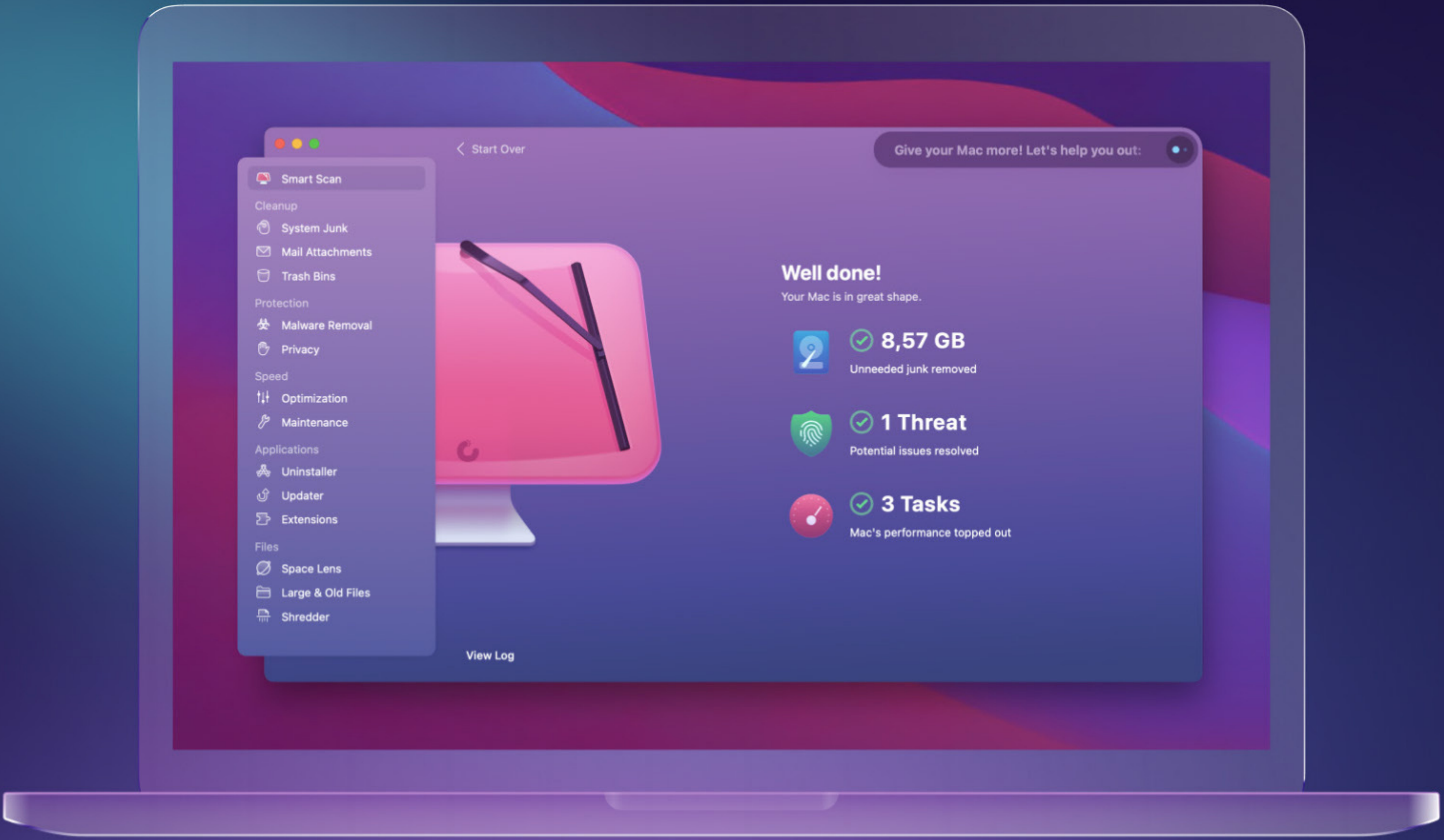
“China is determined to dominate the future of the auto market, including by using unfair practices,” President Joe Biden said when the U.S. investigation was announced. “China’s policies could flood our market with its vehicles, posing risks to our national security. I’m not going to let that happen on my watch.”

China pushed back this week, filing a World Trade Organization complaint that alleges that U.S. subsides for electric vehicles discriminate against Chinese products.

The U.S. Defense Department put Xiaomi on a blacklist in 2021 over alleged links to China’s military, but removed it a few months later after the company denied the links and sued the U.S. government.

MICHELIN
245/40 R 20
EXTRA LOAD

MI
mbo



Start Over
Give your Mac more! Let's help you out:
Smart Scan
Cleanup
System Junk
Mail Attachments
Trash Bins
Protection
Malware Removal
Privacy
Speed
Optimization
Maintenance
Applications
Uninstaller
Updater
Extensions
Files
Space Lens
Large & Old Files
Shredder
View Log

Well done!
Your Mac is in great shape.

8,57 GB
Unneeded junk removed

1 Threat
Potential issues resolved

3 Tasks
Mac's performance topped out

CleanMyMac X

Your Mac.
As good as new.

Learn More

Coca-Cola store

FREE SHIPPING
ON ALL COKE STORE
ORDERS OVER $60!

www.cokestore.com

MASSACHUSETTS, RHODE ISLAND AND CONNECTICUT RECEIVE PROPOSALS FOR OFFSHORE WIND PROJECTS

Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut received proposals Wednesday for offshore wind projects as the three East Coast states hope to boost their reliance on the renewable energy source.

The three states joined in a historic agreement that allows for potential coordinated selection of offshore wind projects.

Massachusetts received bids from Avangrid Renewables, South Coast Wind Energy and

Vineyard Offshore in response to the region's largest solicitation to date for offshore wind, seeking up to 3,600 megawatts.

Gov. Maura Healey's administration "will review bids over the coming months, and coordinate with Connecticut and Rhode Island to evaluate multi-state projects that would increase benefits for the region, lower costs, and enhance project viability," Massachusetts Energy Resources Commissioner Elizabeth Mahony said in a press release.

Rhode Island announced Wednesday that it will evaluate proposals from Avangrid Renewables, Orsted, SouthCoast Wind Energy and Vineyard Offshore. It had requested proposals for approximately 1,200 megawatts of power.

Rhode Island acting Energy Commissioner Chris Kearns said the state looks forward to "reviewing the proposals with Rhode Island Energy along with Massachusetts and Connecticut state energy offices over the next few months."

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection also announced Wednesday that it received proposals from four project developers under the multistate request.

Connecticut is seeking up to 2,000 megawatts of new offshore wind, which would add to the 304 megawatts of offshore wind power it will receive from the Revolution Wind project, which was jointly selected by Connecticut and Rhode Island and is now under development.

"We look forward to evaluating the submitted proposals received under this RFP over the coming months and coordinating review of any multi-state proposals received with Massachusetts and Rhode Island," DEEP Commissioner Katie Dykes said.

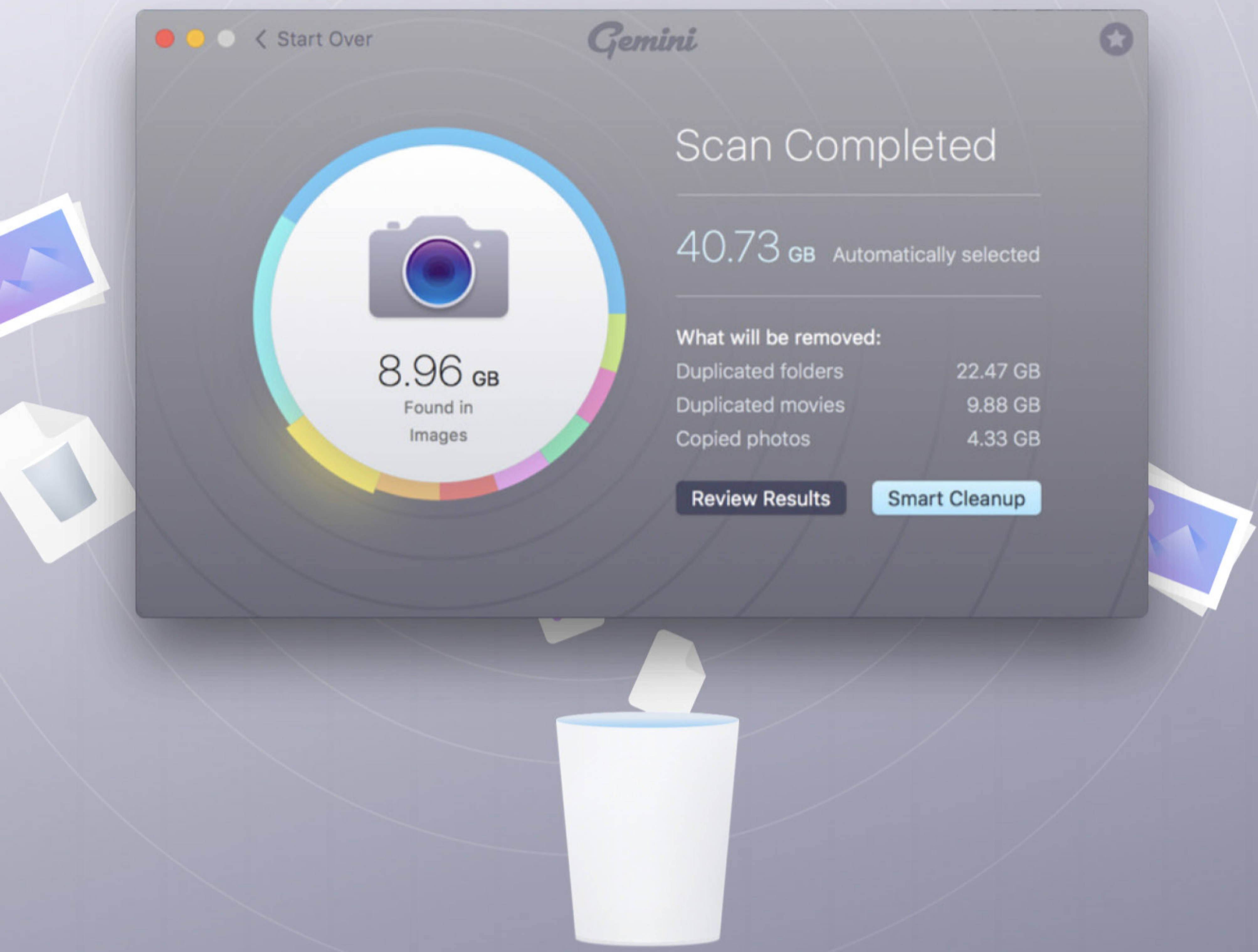
The agency expects to announce in the third quarter of 2024 whether any projects have been selected.

Vineyard Offshore submitted a proposal for a 1,200-megawatt offshore wind project to the three states in response to their solicitation for up to 6,800 megawatts of offshore wind capacity.

"Vineyard Offshore knows how to deliver offshore wind to New England, and that's by earning the trust of the communities we work in," Vineyard Offshore CEO Alicia Barton said.

Ørsted announced it has submitted a proposal for a 1,184-megawatt Starboard Wind project, which would power more than 600,000 homes in Rhode Island.

Avangrid, Inc. submitted multiple proposals to the Massachusetts-Connecticut-Rhode Island solicitation for offshore wind power including New England Wind, representing two projects – the 791-megawatt New England Wind 1 project and 1,080 megawatt New England Wind 2 project.


Start Over
Gemini
Review Results
Smart Cleanup

Scan Completed

40.73 GB Automatically selected

8.96 GB
Found in
Images

What will be removed:

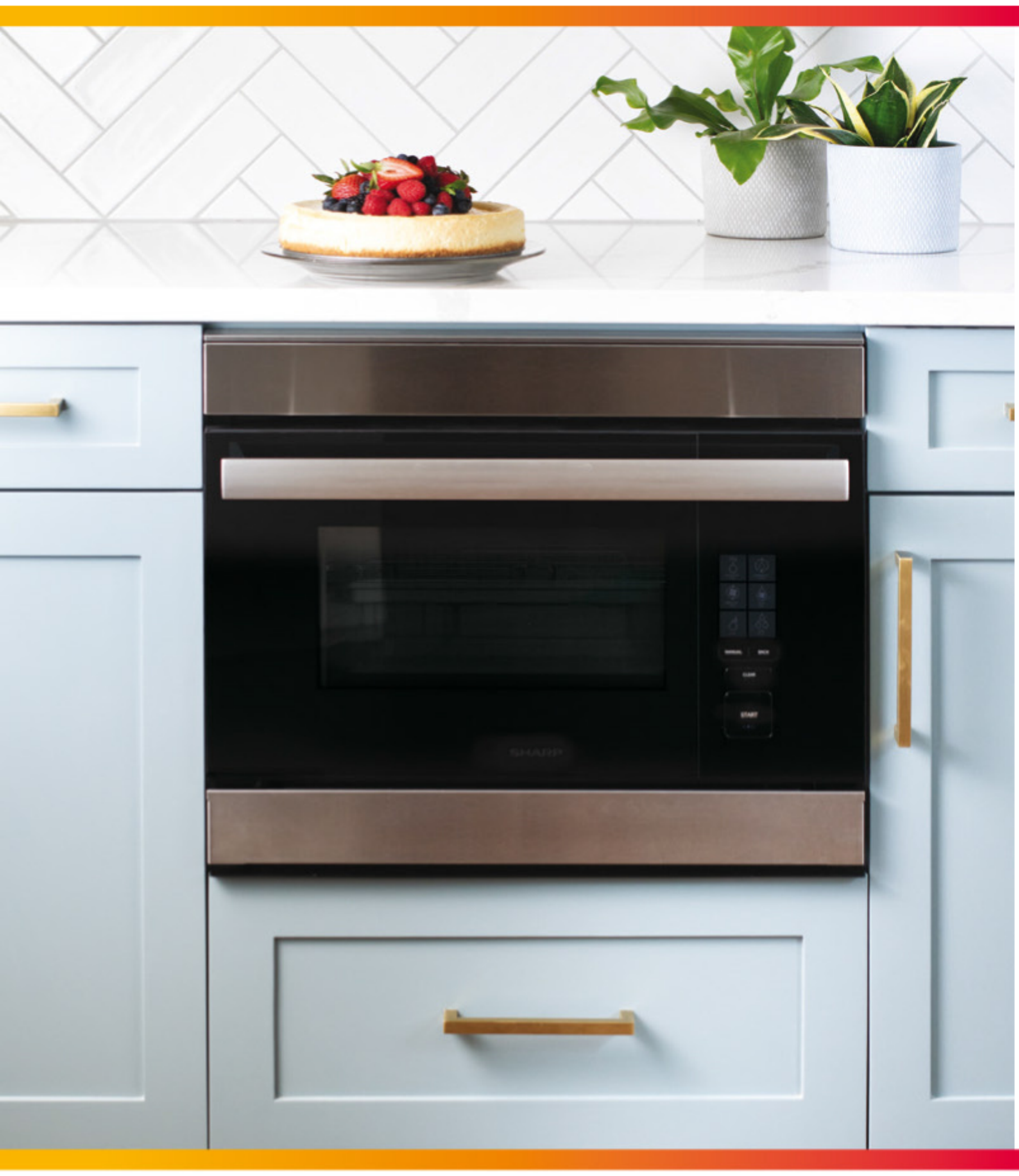
Duplicated folders	22.47 GB
Duplicated movies	9.88 GB
Copied photos	4.33 GB

Gemini 2

The intelligent duplicate file finder

Learn more >

SHARP | Simply Better Living

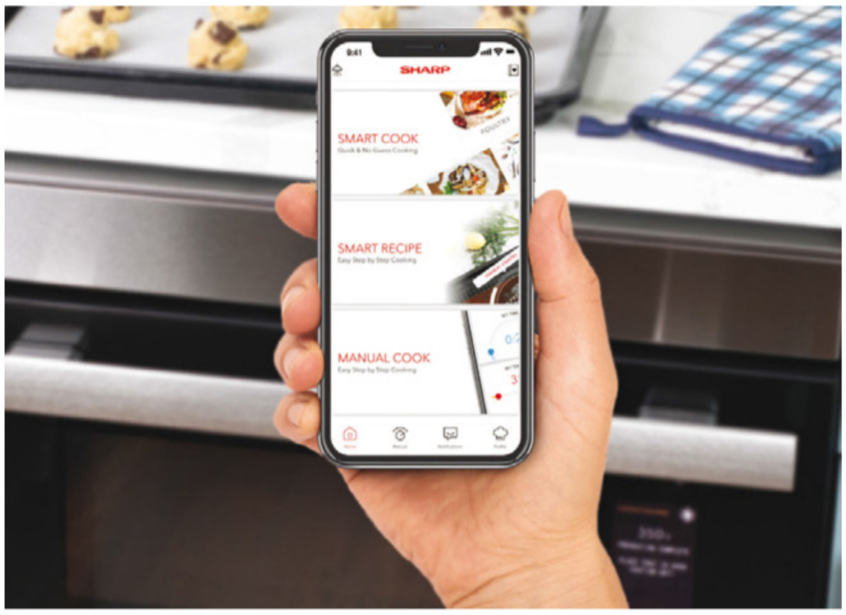


SUPERSTEAM+™ BUILT-IN WALL OVEN

SSC2489DS

The Sharp® SuperSteam+ Built-In Wall Oven is the start of a cooking revolution. With Wi-Fi enabled IoT features, the innovations within this steam oven are a perfect match for modern cooking needs.

While regular steam only reaches 212°F, the SuperSteam+ oven can create superheated steam up to 485°F. Steam this hot can roast meats and caramelize sugars so your food can be brown and crispy on the outside, tender and juicy on the inside. With the Sharp SuperSteam+ Oven, you can grill without smoke, roast without drying, and get the roasty-toasty, tasty results you desire.



Get started right away with built-in recipes and download the Sharp SuperSteam+ Oven app* to enable the smart features and access custom recipes powered by SideChef.

SEE FOR YOURSELF

STEAM BAKE
SELECT STEAM BAKING OPTION FOR MORE INSTRUCTIONS, SEE MANUAL OR SHARP APP
Breads
Water Bath
MANUAL
BACK
CLEAR

The new Sharp SuperSteam+ Built-In Wall Oven features Steam Bake for superior breads, and Water Bath for cheesecakes, custards and puddings.

www.sharpusa.com | simplybetterliving.sharpusa.com

*Mobile Application and Home Assistant Skill available upon commercial release. © 2020 Sharp Electronics Corporation. All rights reserved. Sharp, Supersteam™ Oven and all related trademarks are trademarks or registered trademarks of Sharp Corporation and/or its affiliated entities. Product specifications and design are subject to change without notice. Internal capacity calculated by measuring maximum width, depth and height. Actual capacity for holding food is less.

CHINESE EV MAKERS CHALLENGING MARKET LEADERS AT AUTO SHOW IN BANGKOK

STROM
PHITHAN GREEN
TRIUMPH
NETA
PHITHAN GREEN
VtoL
BYD ATTO 3

BYD
BYD
DENZA D9
BYD DOLPHIN
BYD DOLPHIN
BYD DOLPHIN

XPE
สวัสดี ประเทศไทย
HEY! THAILAND

Chinese electric vehicle makers are showcasing their latest models, including a flying car, as they take on global rivals at the Bangkok International Motor Show.

Companies like BYD, XPeng and Great Wall Motors are quickly growing their sales in Thailand, challenging longstanding market leaders like Toyota, Isuzu and Ford, as they expand exports across the globe.

And Thailand, one of the biggest markets in Southeast Asia, a region of more than 600 million people, has made developing its EV market a priority.

Tesla launched sales in late 2022, offering its popular Model 3 and Model Y at prices aimed at competing with rivals like China's BYD.

BYD, or Build Your Dreams, displayed a wide range of its EV lineup, including its Dolphin, a pure EV that it says runs 490 kilometers (about 300 miles) on a single charge and is priced at 859,999 Thai baht ($23,700).

At the higher end of the spectrum is the Seal, promising 580 kilometers (about 360 miles) on a charge and costing nearly 1.6 million baht (about $44,000).

BYD sold 30,650 EVs in Thailand last year, followed by 12,777 sold by Neta, a brand of Chinese electric vehicle maker Hozon Auto, which is based in eastern China's Zhejiang province. They were trailed by Tesla, British brand MG and Chinese car maker Great Wall Motor.

Also at the show: VinFast, a Vietnamese newcomer that says it plans to expand sales of its EVs to 50 countries by the end of this year. It is building or planning factories in the U.S., India and Indonesia.

Neta has announced plans to begin assembling EVs in Thailand, and Great Wall Motor bought a former General Motors plant in Rayong, south of Bangkok, as a base for its expansion into Southeast Asia.

Thailand's market for EVs accounted for just 0.5% of all EV sales globally, but nearly 60% of EV sales in Southeast Asia in 2022, ahead of both Vietnam and Indonesia, according to market research firm Counterpoint Research.

Thailand is already an auto manufacturing hub, with strong sales especially of pickups that are widely used for taxi services, hauling equipment for people running food stalls and carrying farmers' crops to markets.

The roads are jammed with a wide array of models, with a strong presence of Toyotas, Hondas, Isuzus, Fords, Nissans and Mercedes-Benz. There's also a hefty share of luxury models such as Porsches and Maseratis.

A nationwide network of charging stations is expanding quickly, but most vehicles on the roads are still gasoline, diesel and LPG-fueled vehicles.

XPeng, a start-up based in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou, is another newcomer to an already overcrowded market back home. But Paramee Thingcharoen, its chief marketing officer, said the company saw plenty of opportunity and was testing the waters.

"We target the premium segment, however, in the very high tech products that we have to offer. We're pretty confident that we have

ZEEKR
ZEEKR X

ZEEKR

16
17
BYD
BYD SEALION

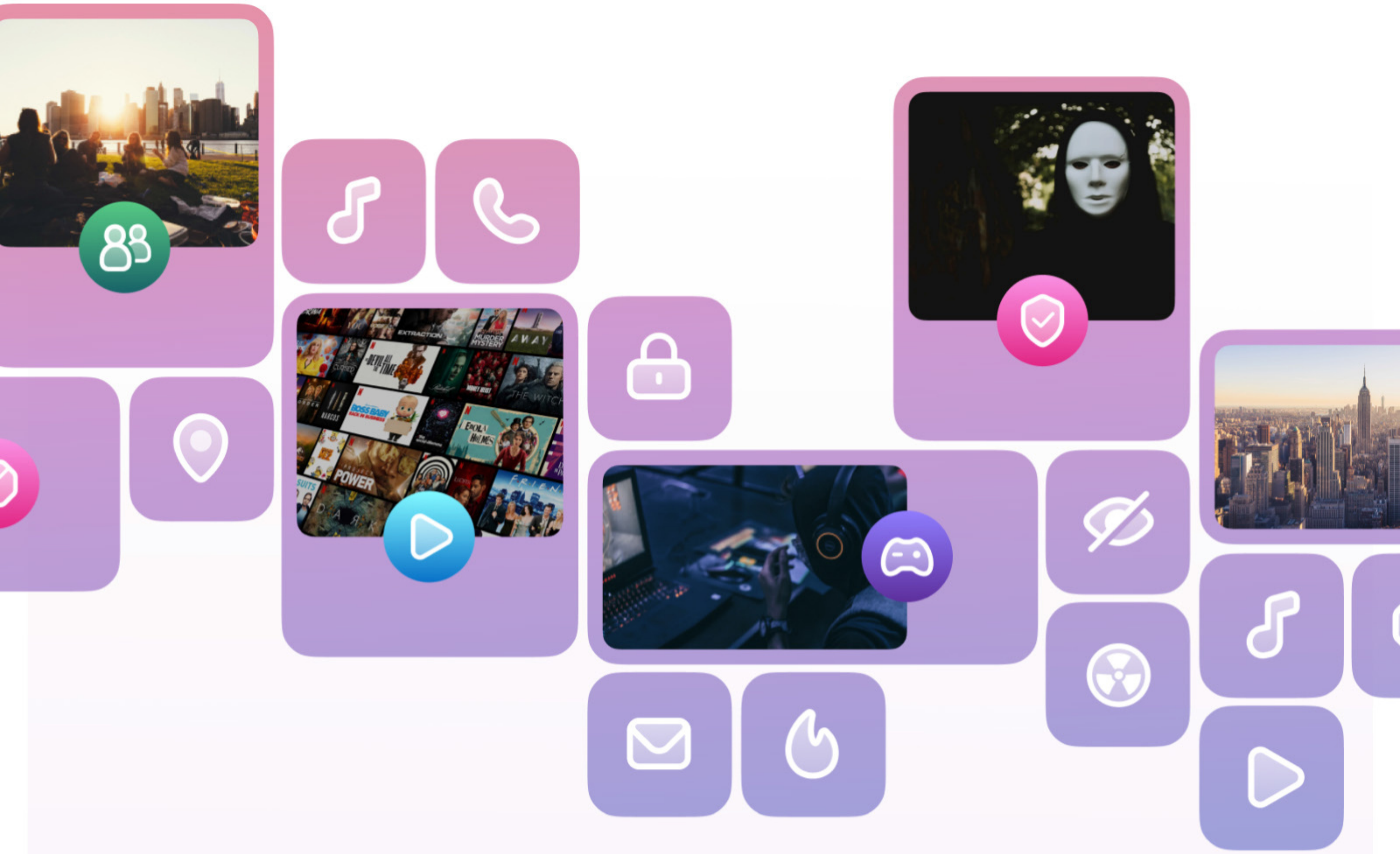
a wide space to enter the market with that positioning, and we're not quite worried about the competition," she said.

XPeng was displaying its XPeng AeroHT Voyager X2, a flying concept car.

The flying car can be flown in China but was only on display in Bangkok since the company does not have a license to fly it in Thailand, Paramee said.

"We believe the future mobility is not limited to only on wheels," she said. "It can be a unicorn you can ride on in the future. It's unlimited."

ClearVPN



The only VPN you'll ever need

Get ClearVPN

PHONE ACCESSORY
SUPER DEALS
UP TO ~~50% OFF~~
Lightinthebox.com
One World, One Market
Offering high quality products in best price for global customers

TRUMP'S SOCIAL MEDIA COMPANY GAINS IN ITS FIRST DAY OF TRADING ON NASDAQ

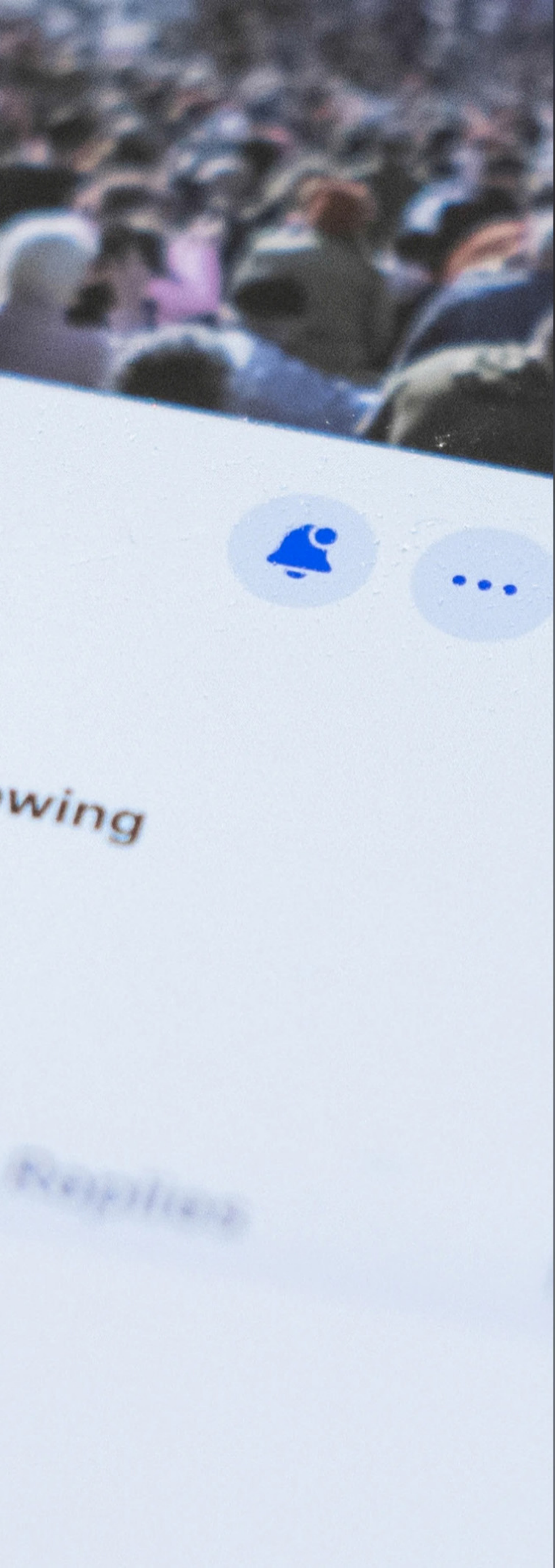
BROADWAY
43
Nasdaq
REWRITE TOMORROW

Shares of Donald Trump's social media company rose about 16% in the first day of trading on the Nasdaq, boosting the value of Trump's large stake in the company as well as the smaller holdings of fans who purchased shares as a show of support for the former president.

Trump Media & Technology Group Corp. merged Monday with a blank-check compan y called Digital World Acquisition Corp. Trump Media, which runs the social media platform Truth

Nasdaq
QUESTION TODAY REWRITE TOMORROW
1475 Broadway New York, NY 10036
Turner
JACKET $35.99
H&M
QUESTION TODAY REWRITE TOMORROW
Nasdaq
brandedcities
PEDESTRIANS
DANGER
AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY

Donald J. Trump
@realDonaldTrump
6.7M Followers
66 Follo
Joined: Feb 11, 2022
www.DonaldJTrump.com
Truths
Truths &
Pinned Truth



Social, has now taken Digital World's place on the Nasdaq stock exchange.

Shares closed at $57.99, up 16.1%, giving the company a market value of $7.85 billion. At one point the stock was up about 59%. Trump holds a nearly 60% ownership stake in the company, now worth about $4.6 billion.

Many of those investing in Trump Media are small-time investors either trying to support Trump or aiming to cash in on the mania, instead of big institutional and professional investors. Those shareholders helped the stock of Digital World more than double this year in anticipation of the merger going through.

Truth Social launched in February 2022, one year after Trump was banned from major social platforms including Facebook and X, formerly Twitter, following the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol. He's since been reinstated to both but has stuck with Truth Social.

On Truth Social Tuesday, users were posting about being shareholders or seeking tips on how to buy shares.

One user urged conservatives to "get behind the DJT stock and sent it over $100 per share" to "drive the liberals insane!" Another declared: "Get yourself a piece of #DJT stock if your a true MAGA supporter."

A day earlier, Trump Media CEO Devin Nunes, a former House Republican, said, "As a public company, we will passionately pursue our vision to build a movement to reclaim the Internet from Big Tech censors."

Despite the enthusiasm, investors could experience a bumpy ride. For one, they're betting on a company with uncertain prospects of turning a profit. Trump Media lost $49 million in the first nine months of last year, when it brought in just $3.4 million in revenue and had to pay $37.7 million in interest expenses.

In a recent regulatory filing, the company cited the high rate of failure for new social media platforms, as well as its expectation that its operations will lose "for the foreseeable future" as risks for investors.

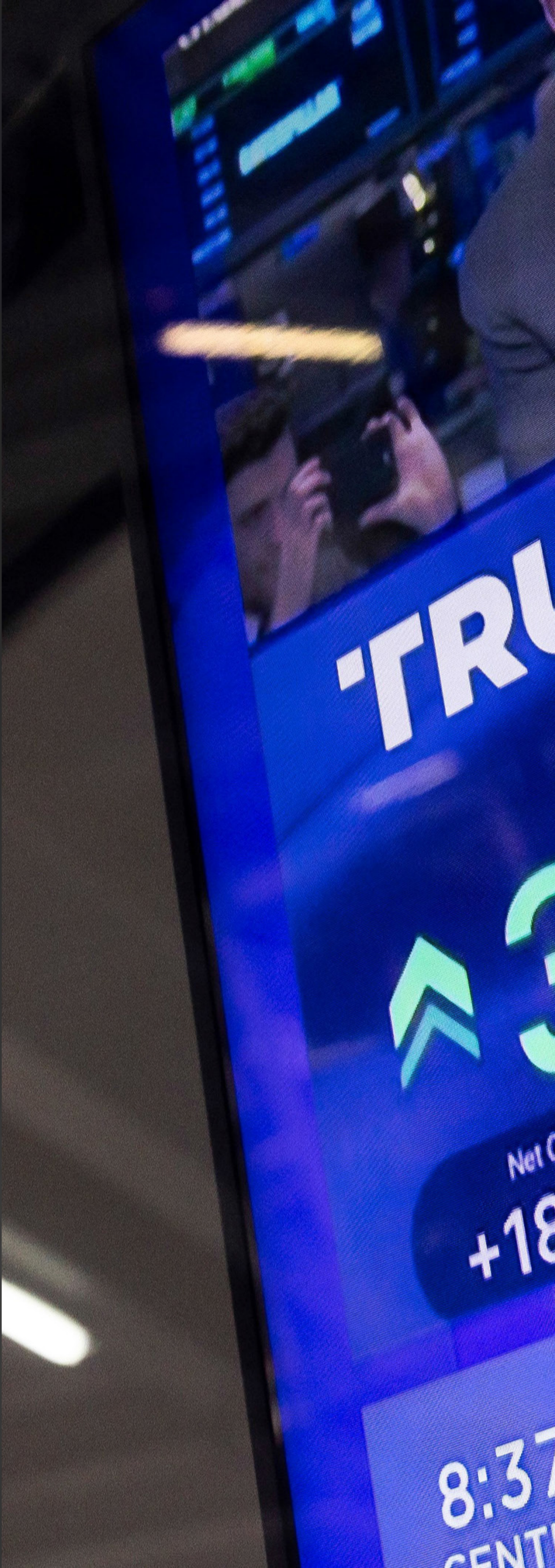
Research firm Similarweb estimates that Truth Social had roughly 5 million active mobile and web users in February. That's far below TikTok's more than 2 billion and Facebook's 3 billion — but still higher than other "alt-tech" rivals like Parler.

However, Trump Media has said it doesn't keep track of some numbers that rivals use as key measures of their performance, such as average revenue per user or active user accounts. It says it wants to focus on the long-term instead of "short-term decision-making."

For that long term, though, skeptics see struggles ahead for a company that's estimated to have far fewer users than rivals in a business where gaining a critical mass is key.

"I think there is a possibility of, sooner or later, the stock price falling by 95%," said Jay Ritter, a professor and expert on initial public offerings of stock at the University of Florida's Warrington College of Business.

Brian Dunn, director of the Institute for Compensation Studies at Cornell University, compared the fervor for Trump Media shares to the meme stock craze that boosted shares



Nasdaq
UTH.
38.00%
DJT
NasdaqListed
Stock Price
$68.93
Change
3.98
TRUMP MEDIA & T
SHARES HALTED
A
RAL
5999

of companies such as GameStop and AMC Entertainment to exorbitant heights in 2021.

"Like any meme stock or fad, as long as there's a greater fool to buy you out for what you paid for it, than you can continue to prosper," Dunn said, warning that small investors "could end up holding the bag when the music stops."

On Monday, Trump told reporters that "Truth Social is doing very well. It's hot as a pistol and doing great." On Tuesday, he posted "I LOVE TRUTH SOCIAL, I LOVE THE TRUTH!," on the platform.

The company, which is based in Florida, said in a recent regulatory filing that it "is highly dependent on the popularity and presence of President Trump." Trump Media has acknowledged that there are risks associated with Trump's outsized influence.

If the former president were to limit or discontinue his relationship with the company for any reason, including due to his campaign to regain the presidency, the company "would be significantly disadvantaged," it said in a filing ahead of the merger with Digital World.

Acknowledging Trump's involvement in numerous legal proceedings, the company noted that "an adverse outcome in one or more" of the cases could negatively affect Trump Media and Truth Social.

Another risk, the company said, was that as a controlling stockholder, Trump would be entitled to vote his shares in his own interest, which may not always be in the interests of all the shareholders generally.

Nasdaq
TRUTH.
46.09%
Net Change
+23.02
Stock Price
$72.97
DJT
Nasdaq Listed
Nasdaq

TRUTH.
Nasdaq
46.09%
Net Change
+23.02
Stock Price
$72.97
DJT
Nasdaq Listed
STANDPIPE / SPRINKLER SHUT-OFF CURB VALVE LOCATED 38 FEET OPPOSITE THIS SIGN ON 43RD STREET
Nas

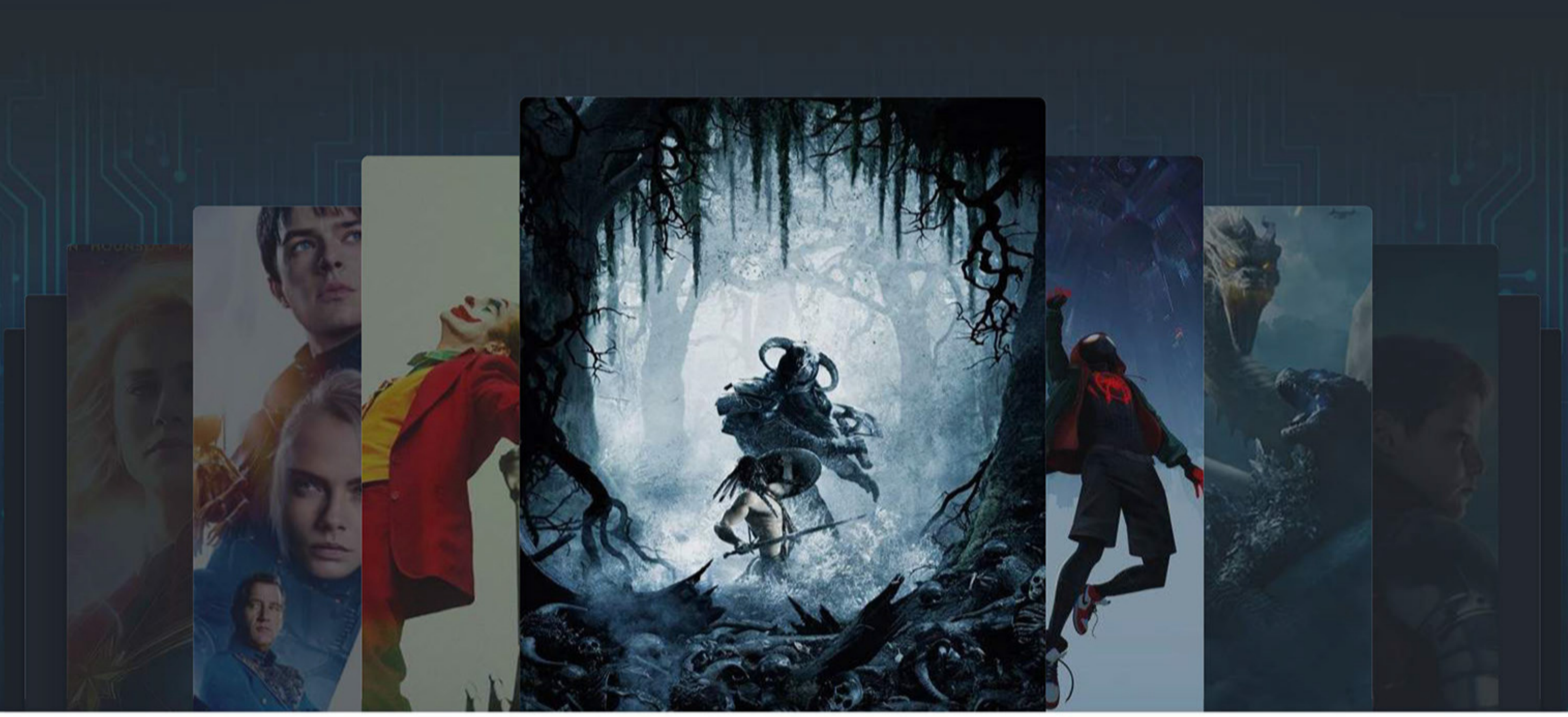
Digiarty
MacXDVD

56% OFF

MACX DVD RIPPER PRO

Convert any DVD Movies to Videos in 5 Minutes

Learn More >>



- Convert all old and new DVD movies to MP4, MOV.
- Convert DVD to all iPhone, iPad, Apple TV, Android, etc.
- Bypass DVD copy protections of all types of DVDs.
- Edit, cut, crop, merge video, add subtitle to video.
- No.1 fast speed, no quality loss thanks to GPU acceleration.

Buy Full Version
~~$67.95~~ for only $29.95

30 DAY 30 Day Money Back
Free Lifetime Upgrade
7X24 Tech Support

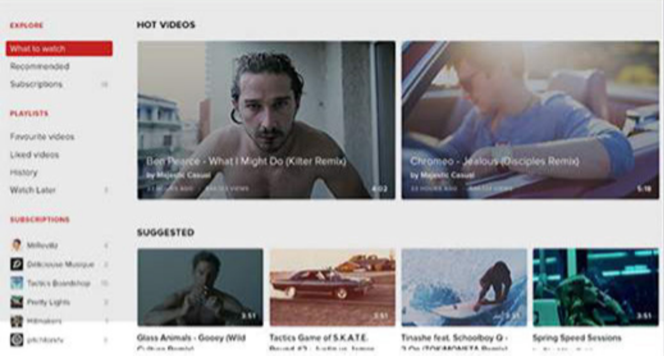
Digiarty MacXDVD

50% OFF

MACX VIDEO CONVERTER PRO

The Fastest Tool to Convert, Resize, Cut, Download 4K, HD Videos.

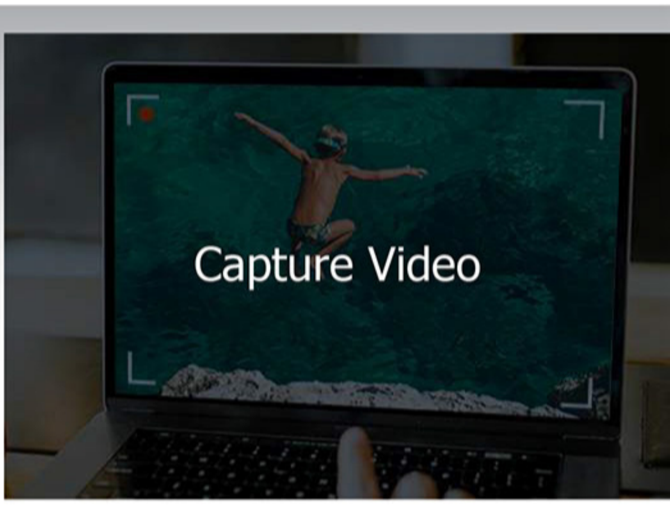
Learn More >>



Download

4K Support

Compress



- Convert 4K/HD videos to MP4, MOV for Apple, Android
- Download videos from YouTube and 1000+ sites
- Compress video file size without quality loss
- Edit video clips with a few clicks
- GPU acceleration tech, no. 1 fast speed.

Buy Full Version
~~$59.95~~ for only $29.95

30 DAY 30 Day Money Back

Free Lifetime Upgrade

7X24 Tech Support

AI Race

APPLE, NVIDIA, AND COMPETITORS BATTLING FOR INDUSTRY DOMINANCE

Image: Bangyu Wang

With Apple unveiling a new method for training large language models (LLMs), rumors circulating about new acquisitions at the Cupertino company, and chip announcements from NVIDIA, the AI race is heating up in what could be the biggest year ever for technology.

APPLE'S RACE TO CATCH UP

Nothing has stood still for long in the world of technology, but when it comes to artificial intelligence (AI), Apple is struggling to compete with established and emerging players. We only have to look at the current state of Siri compared with the likes of OpenAI's ChatGPT. But the tide could be turning, with Apple making significant strides with the development of a **new training method for large language models (LLMs)** that adeptly combines textual and visual data. This breakthrough, encapsulated in their research paper "MM1: Methods, Analysis & Insights from Multimodal LLM Pre-training," represents a pivotal advancement in AI technology, propelling the capabilities of AI systems to new heights.

The MM1 model leverages a rich dataset that includes image-caption pairs, interleaved image-text documents, and purely textual information. This diverse dataset is instrumental in training the AI to excel in tasks such as image captioning, visual question answering, and natural language inference. The model's architecture and training methodology enable it to interpret and generate language grounded in a combination of visual and linguistic cues, a competency crucial for tasks requiring an in-depth understanding of the visual world. The MM1 model's in-context learning prowess is particularly noteworthy, especially in its 30 billion parameter variant. This configuration demonstrates an exceptional ability for multi-step reasoning across multiple images and few-shot "chain-of-thought" prompting, facilitating complex problem-solving with minimal examples. This

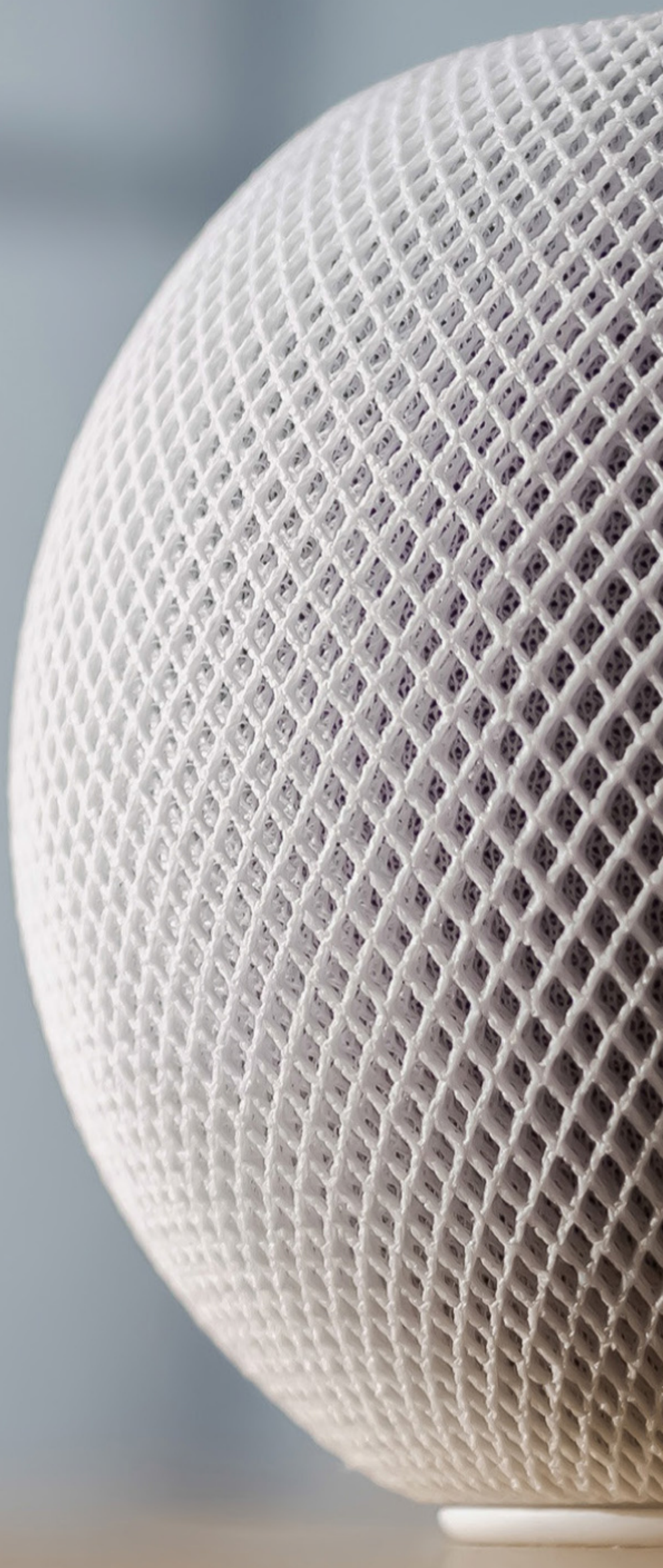
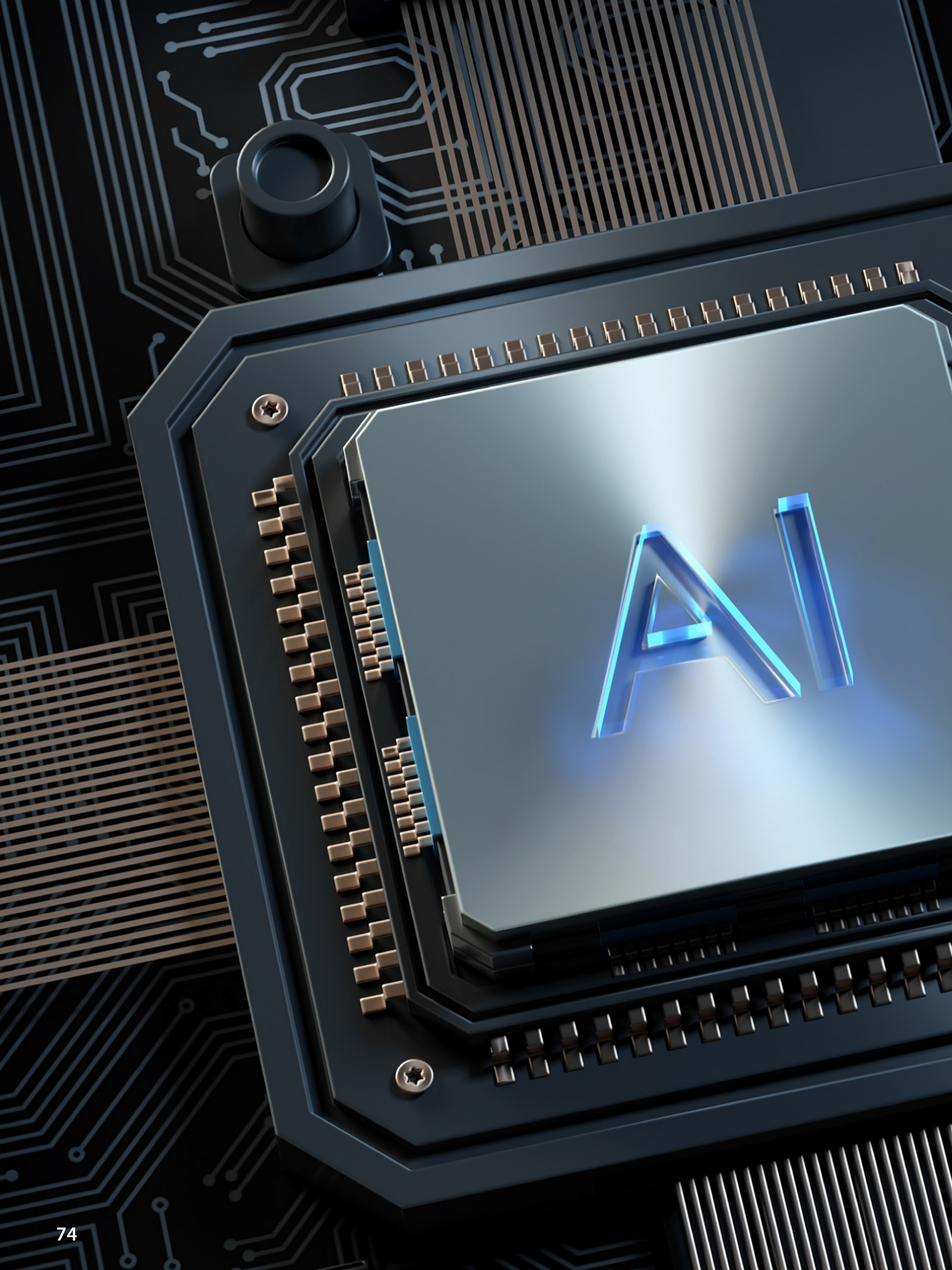
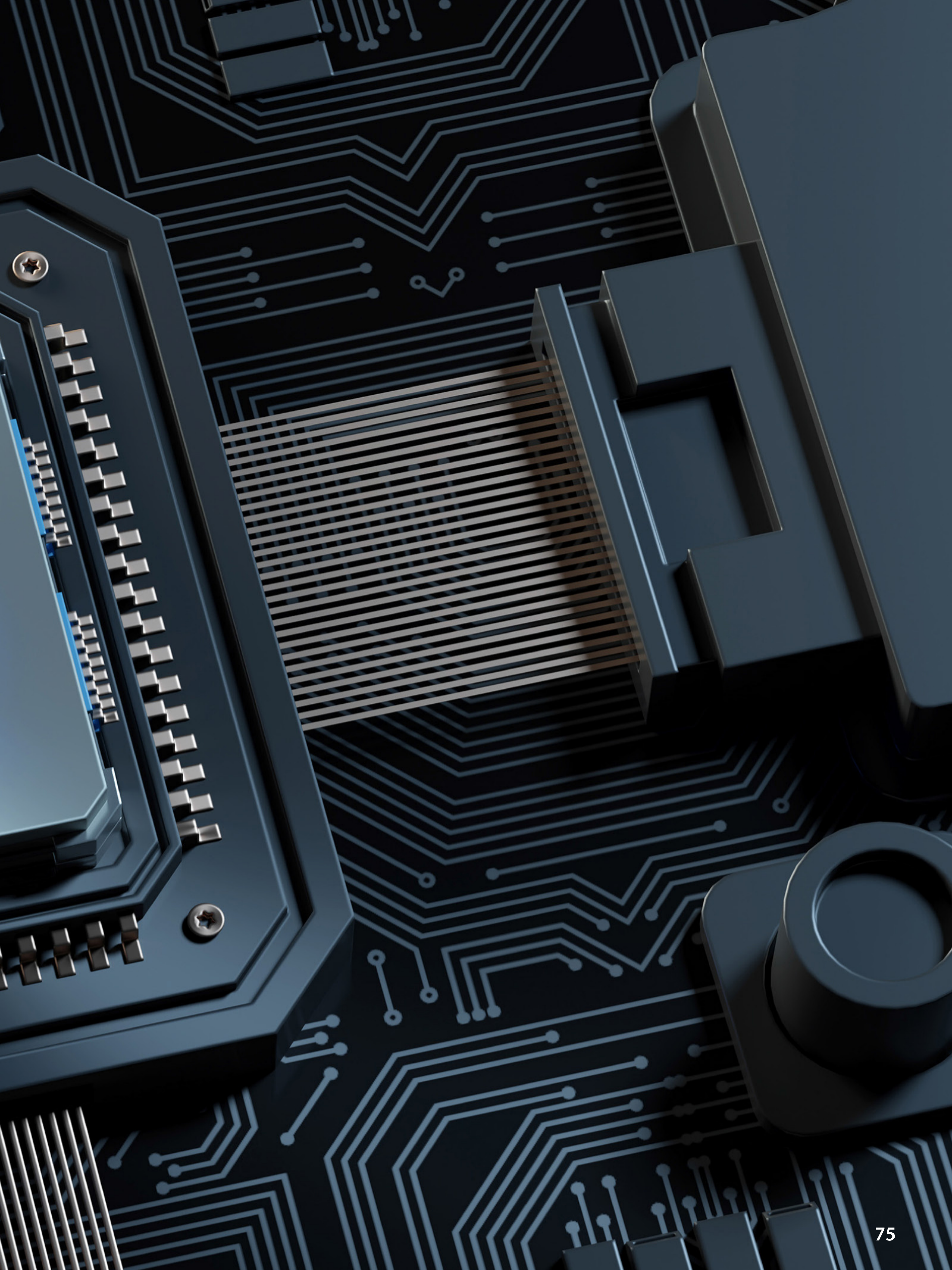


Image: James Yarema


AI

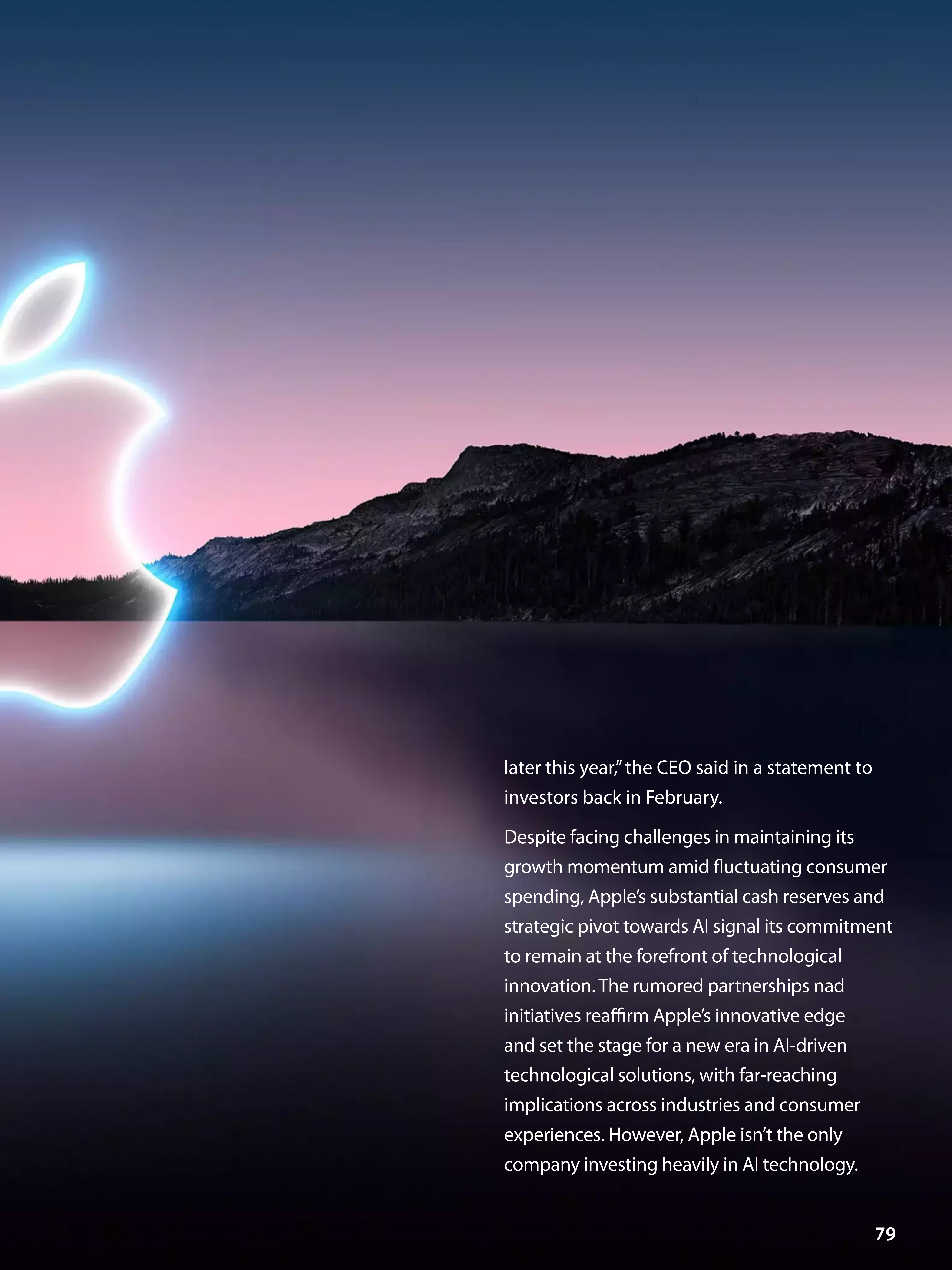


technology will likely be **introduced as part of iOS 18 this summer.**

Amidst stiff competition, Apple's foray into enhancing its AI capabilities is timely. Alongside the MM1 announcement, reports from Bloomberg indicate Apple's ongoing discussions with Google to **incorporate Google's Gemini generative AI model into future iPhone offerings.** This collaboration could see Apple integrating advanced AI features into its devices, keeping pace with competitors like Samsung and Google. The potential partnership between Apple and Google signifies a deepening of their longstanding relationship, dating back to the iPhone's inception. It also highlights the strategic shifts in the tech industry, where AI's transformative potential is increasingly recognized. It also shows Apple's struggle to build its own AI technology at the required pace. Google and Microsoft have decades of search engine data and expertise under their belts. In contrast, Apple is on the back foot and will need to invest billions of dollars to offer its rival eventually. In the meantime, partnering with an industry leader makes sense. And it's not just Google that Apple is considering working with - Apple has recently held discussions with Baidu Inc.'s team to **use its generative artificial intelligence in iPhones and other devices.** Separately, **Apple has held conversations with OpenAI on the project.**

Partnerships like these are no doubt a short-term fix. Investors have criticised Apple for its speed to market on AI, and there are clear indications that the company is working on its own AI technology behind the scenes. Its

recent acquisition of the AI startup DarwinAI sheds further light on Apple's strategic direction. While traditionally reticent about its investments, this move suggests a clear focus on enhancing AI capabilities, particularly in visual AI inspection, to improve manufacturing quality. And let's not forget **comments made by Apple CEO Tim Cook earlier this year about artificial intelligence.** "As we look ahead, we will continue to invest in these and other technologies that will shape the future. That includes artificial intelligence, where we continue to spend a tremendous amount of time and effort, and we're excited to share the details of our ongoing work in that space

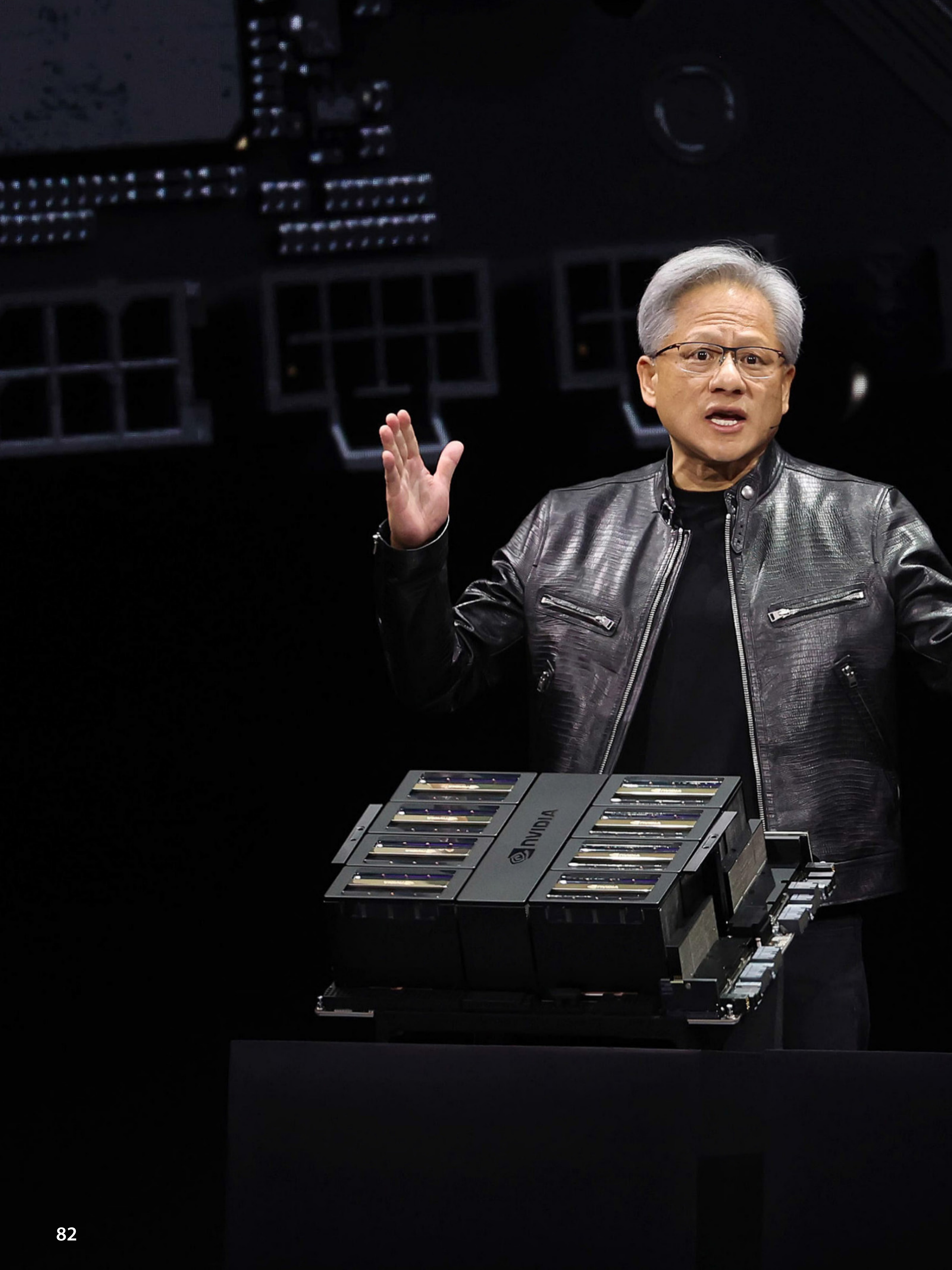


later this year," the CEO said in a statement to investors back in February.

Despite facing challenges in maintaining its growth momentum amid fluctuating consumer spending, Apple's substantial cash reserves and strategic pivot towards AI signal its commitment to remain at the forefront of technological innovation. The rumored partnerships nad initiatives reaffirm Apple's innovative edge and set the stage for a new era in AI-driven technological solutions, with far-reaching implications across industries and consumer experiences. However, Apple isn't the only company investing heavily in AI technology.

A

AI



NVIDIA

NVIDIA POWERING AHEAD

NVIDIA, a titan in the realm of artificial intelligence (AI) technology, has once again demonstrated its prowess with unveiling its latest AI chip, **the B200 "Blackwell."** This new chip marks a significant leap in performance, boasting the ability to perform specific tasks up to 30 times faster than its predecessors. This development not only reinforces NVIDIA's dominance in the market, where it holds an impressive 80% market share **with a share price surging 239% in 2023** but also sets a new benchmark in AI capabilities. During its annual developer conference, which marked an iPhone unveiling, NVIDIA's Chief Executive, Jensen Huang, introduced the B200 "Blackwell" chip alongside a suite of new software tools designed to enhance system efficiency and AI integration for businesses. The chip's unprecedented speed and performance are poised to revolutionize various sectors, from cloud computing to AI research and development.

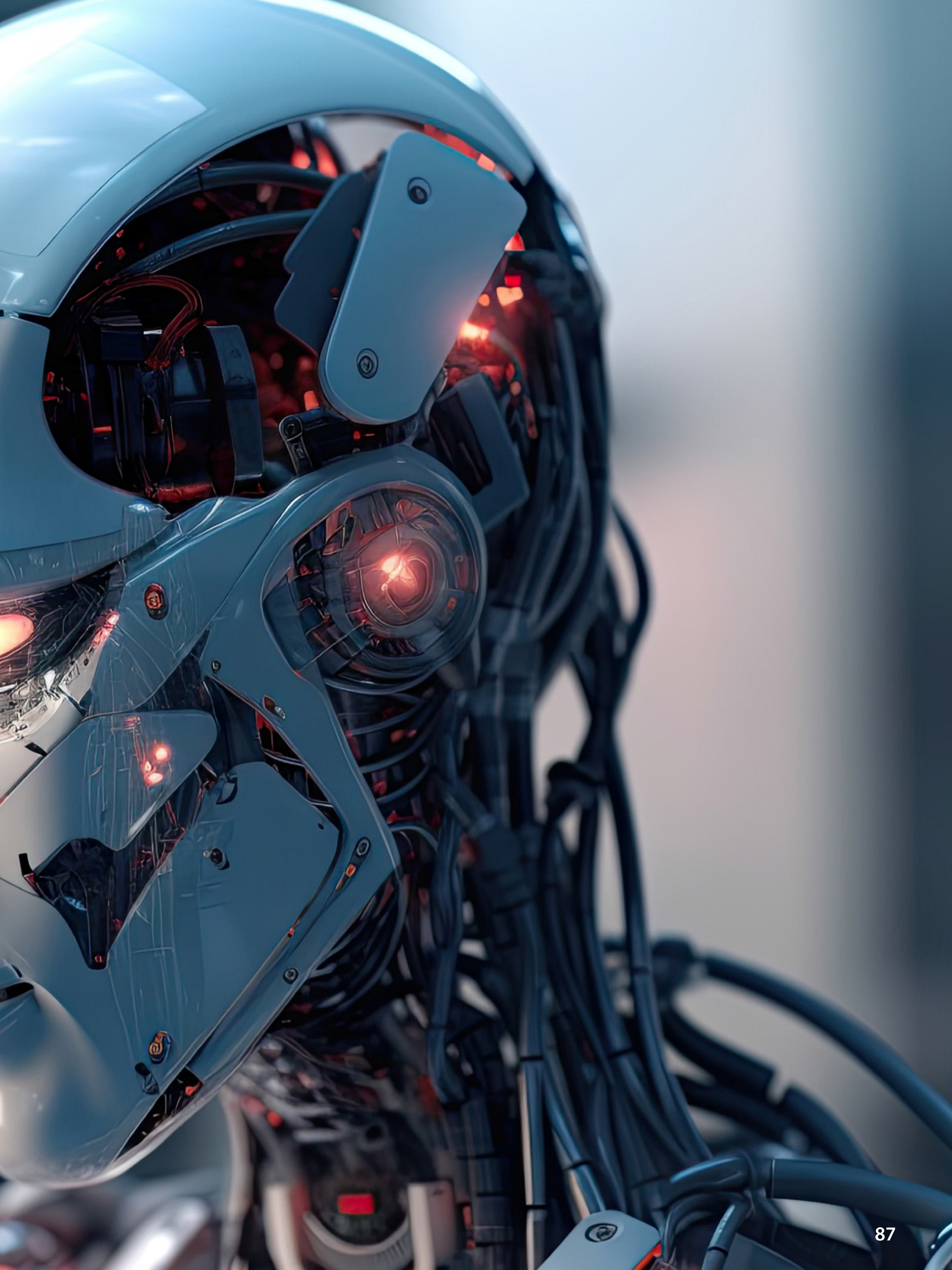
The conference's anticipation and excitement surrounding NVIDIA's latest offerings were palpable. Industry experts and attendees likened the energy to the early days of tech giants like Steve Jobs, highlighting the transformative potential of NVIDIA's innovations. Bob O'Donnell of Technalysis Research noted the exceptional buzz, emphasizing the industry's recognition of this milestone in tech evolution. NVIDIA's influence extends across the tech landscape, with major players such as Amazon, Google, Microsoft, and OpenAI set to leverage the B200 "Blackwell" chip for their cloud-computing services and AI applications. This wide adoption underscores

NVIDIA's pivotal role in shaping the future of AI technology.

The conference also unveiled NVIDIA's foray into the automotive industry, with a new line of chips designed for in-car chatbots. Renowned Chinese electric vehicle manufacturers BYD and Xpeng are among the first to integrate these innovations. Furthermore, NVIDIA is exploring the realm of humanoid robots, introducing a series of chips dedicated to this futuristic endeavor, highlighting its commitment to diversifying its AI applications. At the same time, **Apple has reportedly pulled the plug on its car ambitions.**

NVIDIA's latest advancements are a testament to its engineering and innovation prowess and a signal to the world of the accelerated pace at which AI technology is evolving. As NVIDIA continues to push the boundaries of what's possible, its role in shaping the future of technology and its impact across industries cannot be understated. It's also a warning to brands like Apple to put AI at the forefront of their minds in the years ahead.

It's hard to go a day without reading about AI and its impact on our lives. With 2024 set to be the biggest year yet, we're waiting with bated breath for WWDC, where Apple could unveil innovative AI features to bolster productivity and take the company to new heights.



Run Your Private Cloud Office

All-in-one suite for your business

Make use of ONLYOFFICE online editors integrated with collaboration platform:
mail, CRM, projects, calendar and much more.

180-Day Free Trial

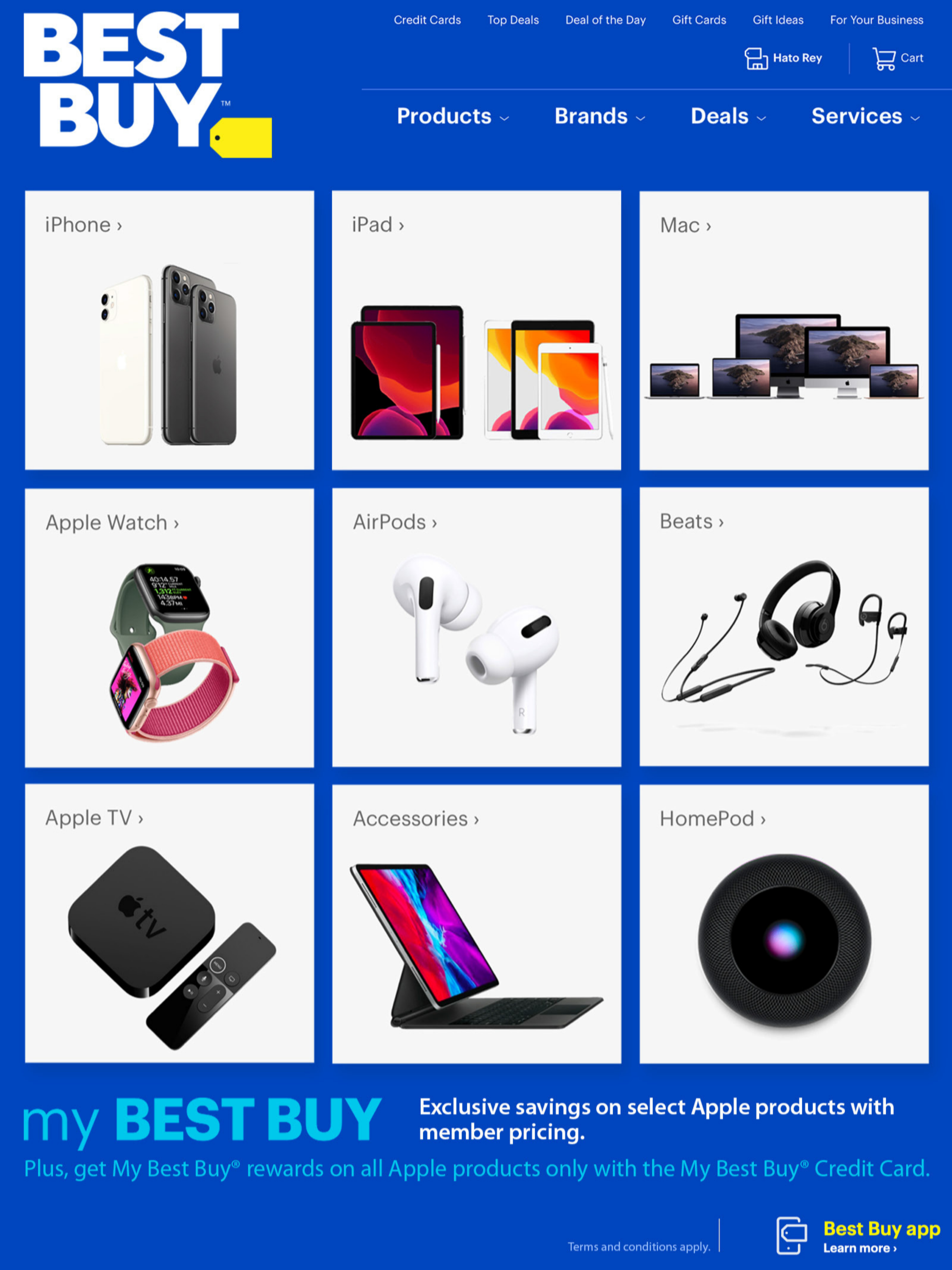
GET ONLYOFFICE NOW

ONLYOFFICE by Ascensio System SIA offers a powerful office suite that comprises online editors for text documents, spreadsheets and presentations highly compatible with Microsoft Office and OpenDocument file formats. ONLYOFFICE provides users with multiple editing tools and collaborative features ensuring greater team workflow, and seamless work with complex formatting and objects within your web solution.

100% compatible with MS Office formats

www.onlyoffice.com

ONLYOFFICE


BEST BUY
Credit Cards
Top Deals
Deal of the Day
Gift Cards
Gift Ideas
For Your Business
Hato Rey
Cart
Products
Brands
Deals
Services
iPhone ›
iPad ›
Mac ›
Apple Watch ›
AirPods ›
Beats ›
Apple TV ›
Accessories ›
HomePod ›
my BEST BUY
Best Buy app
Learn more ›

Exclusive savings on select Apple products with member pricing.

Plus, get My Best Buy® rewards on all Apple products only with the My Best Buy® Credit Card.

Terms and conditions apply.

APPLE ANNOUNCES WORLDWIDE DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE DATES, IN-PERSON EVENT

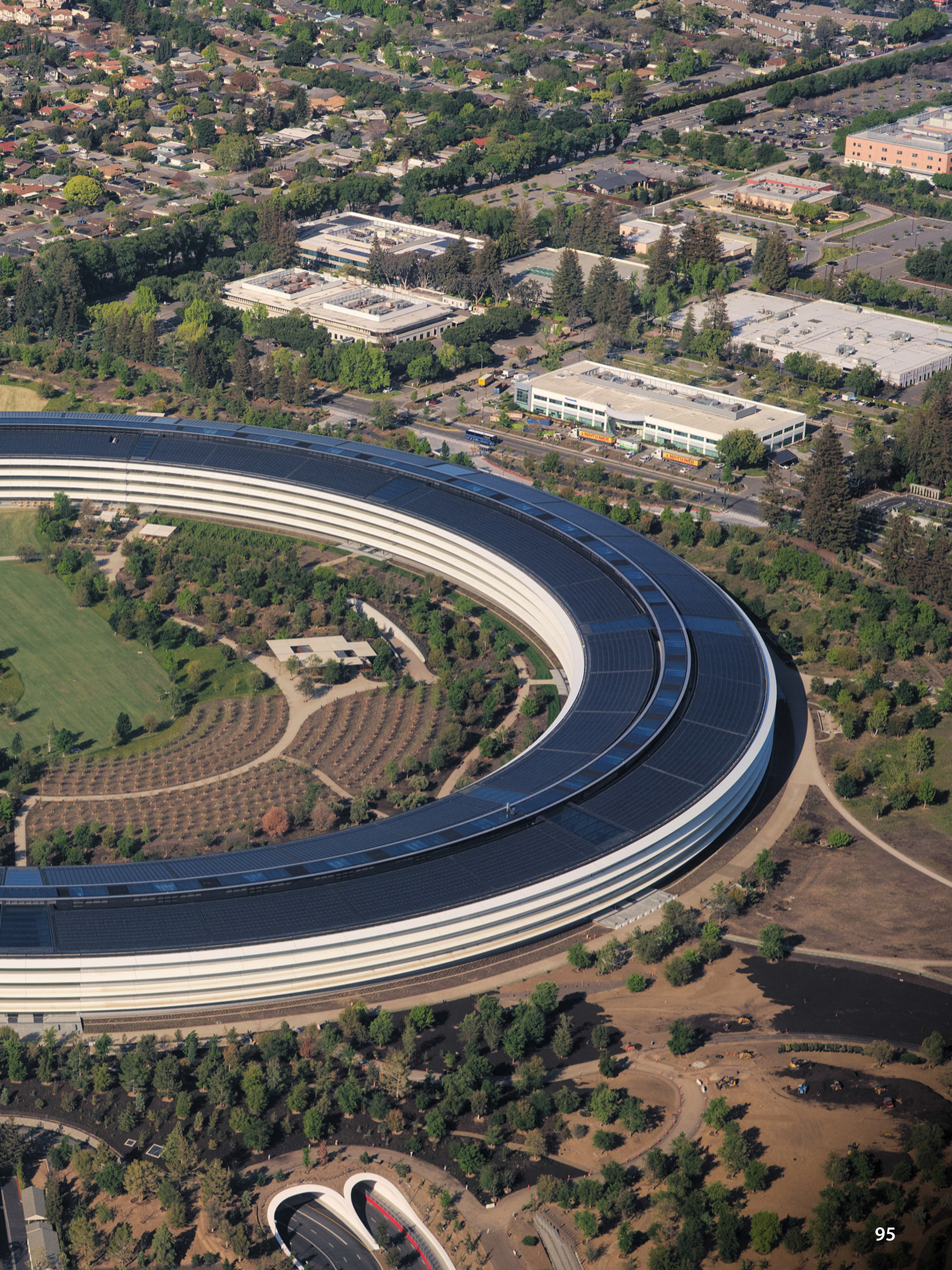
Apple has announced their annual developers conference 'WWDC 2024' will take place June 10 through June 14.

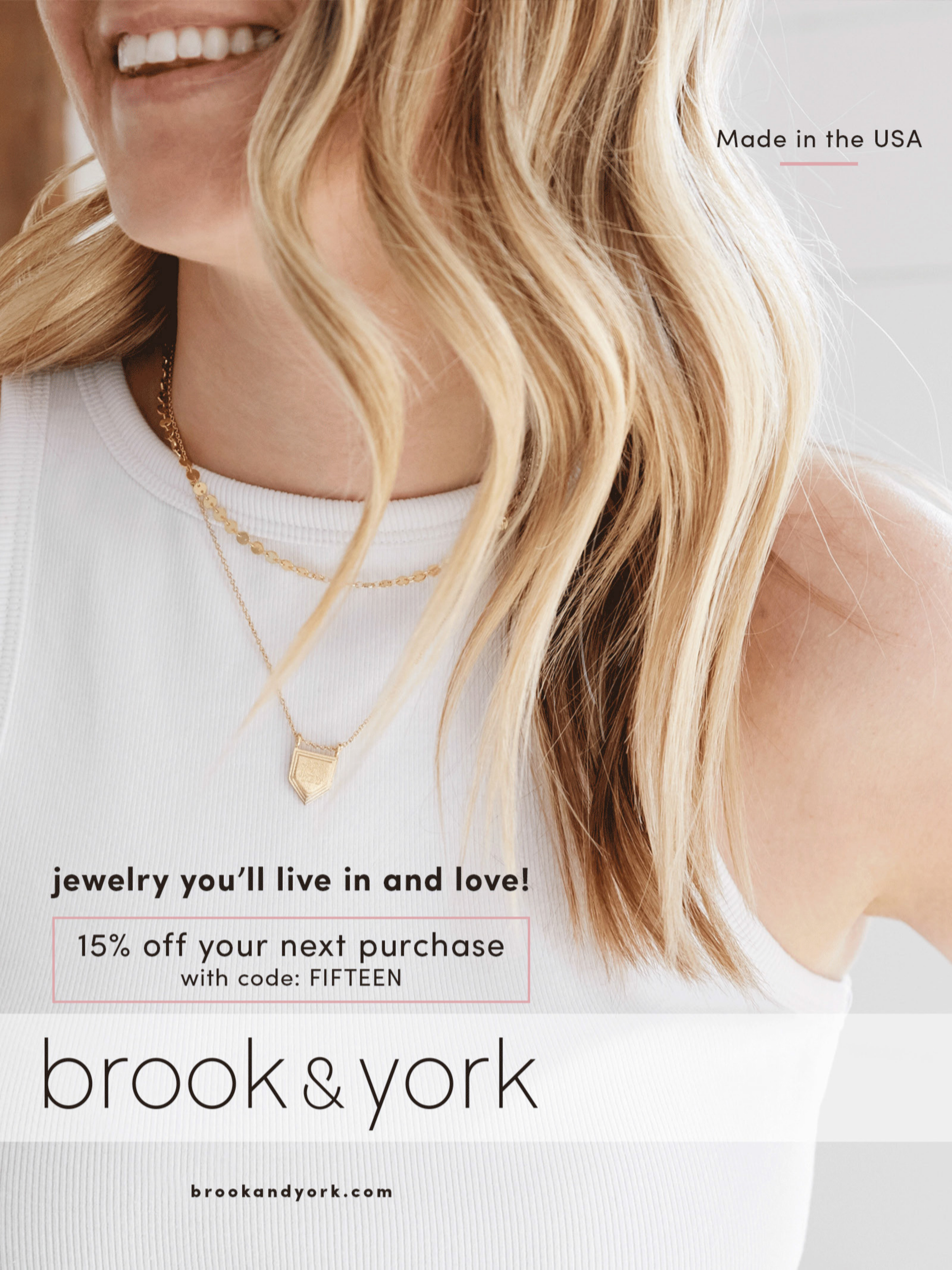
The big summer event will be live-streamed, but some select developers have been invited to attend in-person events at Apple's campus in Cupertino, California, on June 10.

The company typically showcases their latest software and product updates — including the iPhone, iPad, Apple Watch, AppleTV and Vision Pro headset — during a keynote address on the first day.

Contributing to a drop in Apple's stock price this year is concern it lags behind Microsoft and Google in the push to develop products powered by artificial intelligence technology. While Apple tends to keep its product development close to the vest, CEO Tim Cook signaled at the company's annual shareholder meeting in February that it has been making big investments in generative AI and plans to disclose more later this year.

The week-long conference will have opportunities for developers to connect with Apple designers and engineers to gain insight into new tools, frameworks and features, according to the company's announcement.




Made in the USA
jewelry you'll live in and love!
15% off your next purchase
with code: FIFTEEN
brook & york
brookandyork.com

fromyouflowers.com

20% OFF SITEWIDE »

All gifts eligible for no contact delivery.

APRIL'S TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE PROMISES TO BE THE BEST YET FOR EXPERIMENTS

April's total solar eclipse promises to be a scientific bonanza, thanks to new spacecraft and telescopes — and cosmic chance.

The moon will be extra close to Earth, providing a long and intense period of darkness, and the sun should be more active with the potential for dramatic bursts of plasma. Then there's totality's densely populated corridor stretching from Mexico to the U.S. to Canada.

Hundreds if not thousands of the tens of millions of spectators will double as "citizen scientists," helping NASA and other research groups better understand our planet and star.

They'll photograph the sun's outer crownlike atmosphere, or corona, as the moon passes between the sun and Earth, blotting out sunlight for up to 4 minutes and 28 seconds on April 8. They'll observe the quieting of birds and other animals as midday darkness falls. They'll also measure dropping temperatures, monitor clouds and use ham radios to gauge communication disruptions.

At the same time, rockets will blast off with science instruments into the electrically charged portion of the atmosphere near the edge of space known as the ionosphere. The small rockets will soar from Wallops Island, Virginia — some 400 miles outside totality but with 81% of the sun obscured in a partial eclipse. Similar launches were conducted from New Mexico during last October's "ring of fire" solar eclipse that swept across the western U.S. and Central and South America.

"Time for the biggie! It is pretty exciting!!!" Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's Aroh Barjatya, the rockets' mission director, said in an email.

NASA's high-altitude jets also will take to the air again, chasing the moon's shadow with improved telescopes to study the sun's corona and surrounding dust.

"Dust sounds boring," acknowledged NASA's eclipse program manager Kelly Korreck. "But at the same time, dust is actually really interesting.

Those are the leftover remnants from when the solar system was forming."

More than 600 weather balloons will be launched by college students along the track, providing livestreams while studying atmospheric changes. Cloudy skies shouldn't matter.

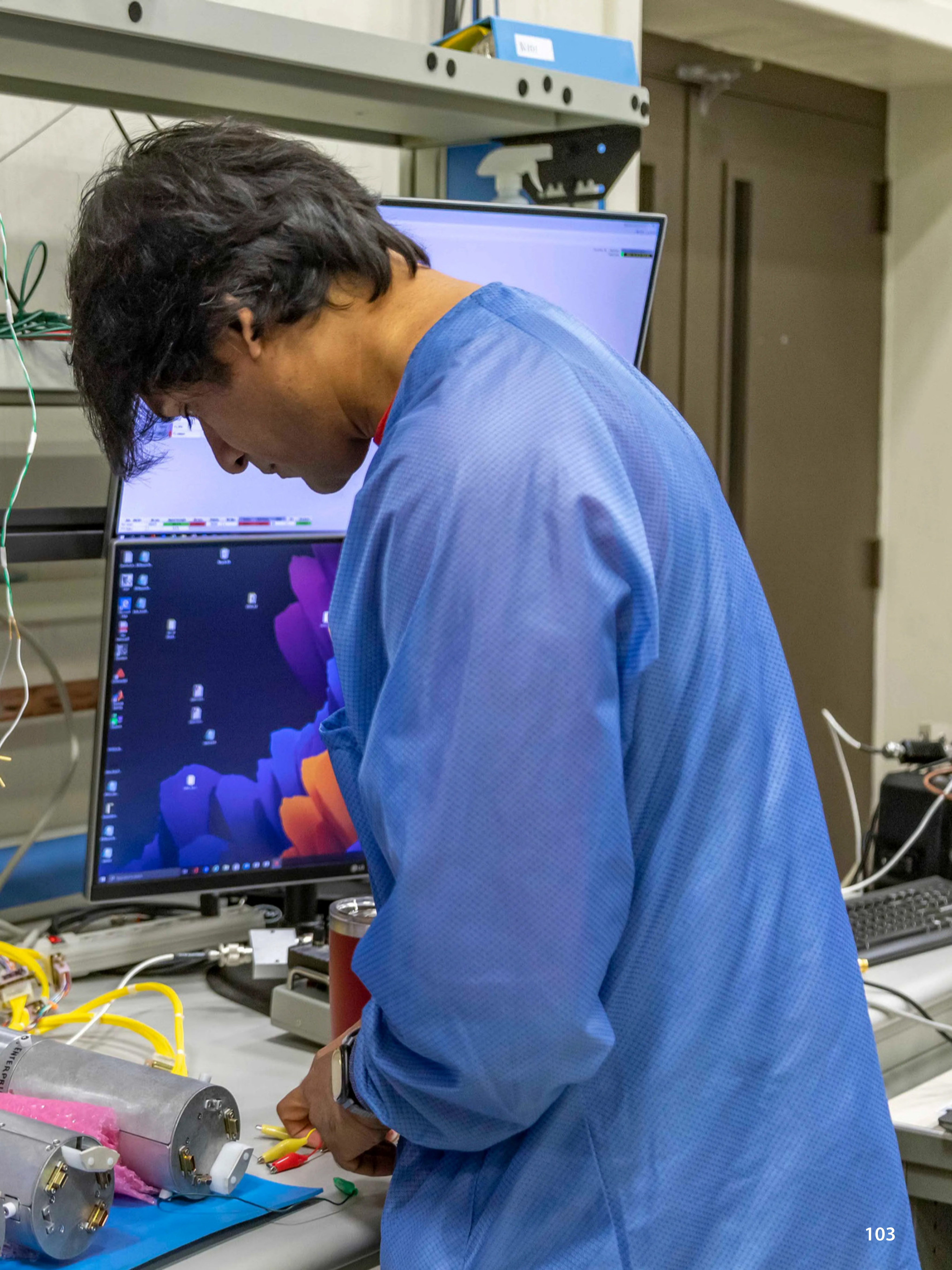
"Lucky for us, the balloons flying to 80,000 feet and above don't care if it's cloudy on the ground," said Angela Des Jardins, an astrophysicist at Montana State University who's coordinating the nationwide project.

And if the Federal Aviation Administration approves, a 21-foot (6.5-meter) kite will lift a science instrument three miles (5 kilometers) above Texas in an experiment by the University of Hawaii's Shadia Habbal. She, too, wants to get above any clouds that might hamper her observations of the sun.

Normally hidden by the sun's glare, the corona is on full display during a total solar eclipse, making it a prime research target. The spiky tendrils emanating thousands of miles (kilometers) into space are mystifyingly hotter than the sun's surface — in the millions of degrees, versus thousands.

"In terms of the value of total eclipses, science still cannot explain how the corona is heated to such extreme temperatures," said retired NASA astrophysicist Fred Espenak, better known as Mr. Eclipse for all his charts and books on the subject.

The U.S. won't see another total solar eclipse on this scale until 2045, so NASA and everyone else is pulling out all the stops.



April's eclipse will begin in the Pacific and make landfall at Mazatlan, Mexico, heading up through Texas and 14 other U.S. states before crossing into Canada and exiting into the Atlantic at Newfoundland. Those outside the 115-mile-wide (185-kilometer-wide) path, will get a partial eclipse.

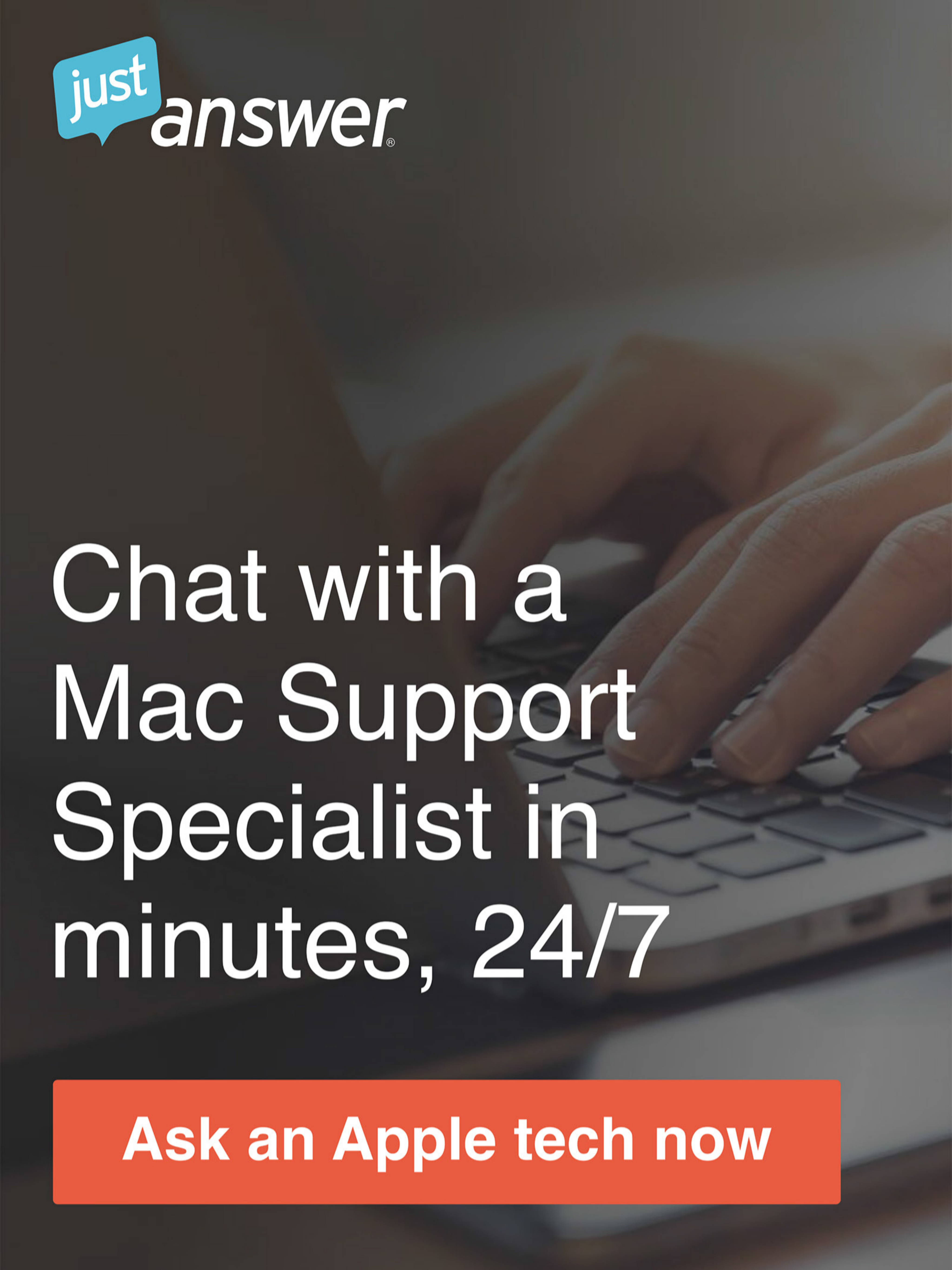
Scientists got a taste of what's to come during the 2017 total solar eclipse that stretched from Oregon to South Carolina. This time, the moon is closer to Earth, resulting in more minutes of darkness and a wider path.

"Any time we can observe for longer, that gives scientists more data," Korreck said.

Another scientific bonus this time: The sun will be just a year away from its maximum solar activity, as opposed to 2017 when it was near its minimum. That means lots more action at the sun, possibly even a coronal mass ejection during the eclipse, with massive amounts of plasma and magnetic field blasted into space.

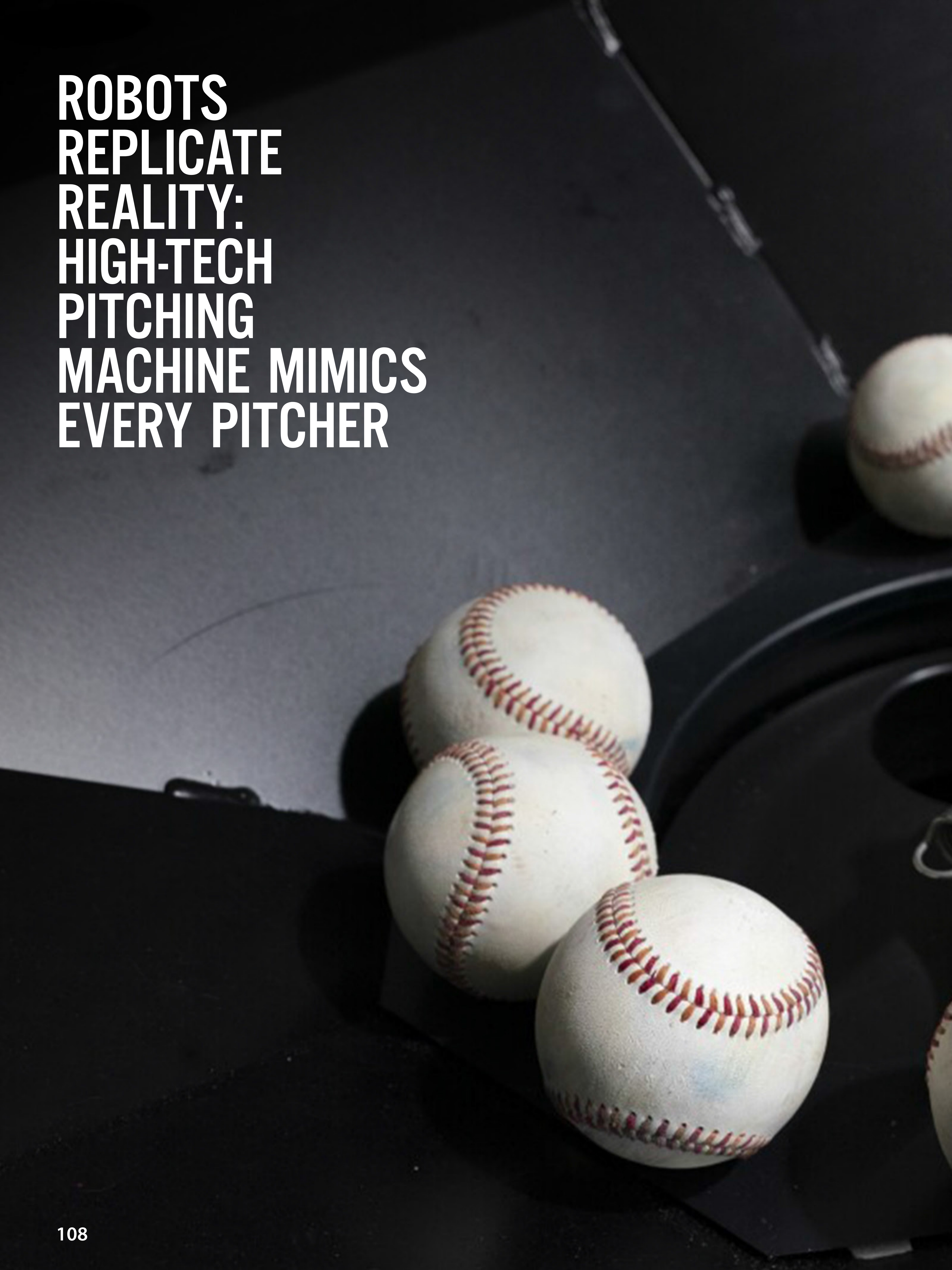
Plus there are two new spacecraft out there studying the sun: NASA's Parker Solar Probe and the European Space Agency and NASA's Solar Orbiter. They'll join other spacecraft on eclipse duty, including the International Space Station and its astronauts.

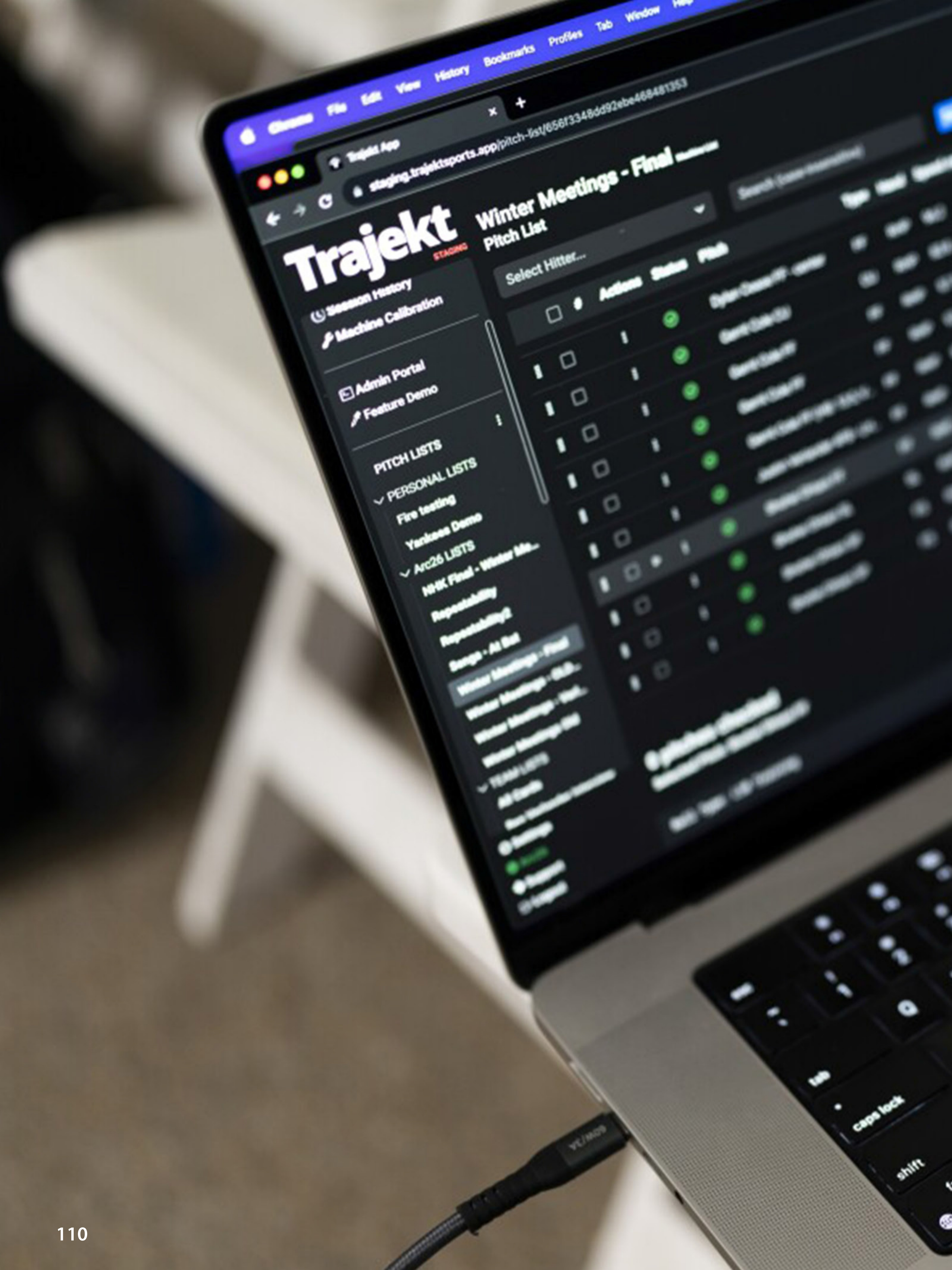
Closer to home, April's eclipse, unlike previous ones, will pass over three U.S. radar sites typically used for monitoring space weather. The stations will tune in to what's happening in the upper atmosphere as the skies dim.


just answer
Chat with a Mac Support Specialist in minutes, 24/7
Ask an Apple tech now

PLUSHBEDS
CALIFORNIA
SHOP NOW
PLUSHBEDS
CALIFORNIA

ROBOTS REPLICATE REALITY: HIGH-TECH PITCHING MACHINE MIMICS EVERY PITCHER




Chrome
File
Edit
View
History
Bookmarks
Profiles
Tab
Window
Trajekt App
staging.trajektsports.app/pitch-list/656f3348dd92ebe468481353
Trajekt
STAGING
Winter Meetings - Final
Pitch List
Select Hitter...
Session History
Machine Calibration
Admin Portal
Feature Demo
PITCH LISTS
PERSONAL LISTS
Fire testing
Yankees Demo
Arc26 LISTS
NHK Final - Winter Me...
Repeatability
Repeatability2
Actions
Status
Pitch
Type
tab
caps lock
shift

Nestor Cortes got behind the plate in a batting cage and watched an 8-foot-high, 1,200-pound robot spit out fastballs, cutters and sweepers just like the ones spinning off the fingertips of his left hand.

“It was like seeing myself pitch. That was crazy,” the New York Yankees All-Star left-hander said.

Technology has come a long way since the days of the Iron Mike.

The Trajekt Arc pitching machine uses baseball’s high-tech data to mimic the way balls break from every big league pitcher and has been approved by Major League Baseball for in-game use this year in batting cages. Using video of deliveries and data, the robot allows a hitter to step in against recreated offerings from any pitcher he wants to face. Dodgers two-way star Shohei Ohtani said he used Trajekt to view his pitches from a different vantage point.

“You’re training their brain. You’re training their eyes,” Philadelphia hitting coach Kevin Long said.

Each machine costs $15,000 to $20,000 a month as part of a three-year lease, an unimaginable leap forward from the pitching gun invented by Princeton mathematics professor Charles Howard Hinton in 1896 that looked like a 2 1/2-foot-long cannon.

Paul Giovagnoli turned the concept into a business. He owned golf driving ranges in Wichita and Topeka, Kansas, wanted to add baseball and created what become known as the Iron Mike. Giovagnoli founded Master Pitching Machine in 1952, and its units with long metal arms became omnipresent throughout the majors.

By the mid-1970s, machines with spinning wheels entered the market, the better to replicate breaking balls, and the Yankees had three at $1,600 each at spring training in 1978.

Those models have gone the way of flannel uniforms.

Spinball Sports' iPitch Smart Machine retails for $14,000 and is programmed with 16 built-in pitchers with 140 pitches. Company sales manager Sam Root says there are more than 100 of its iPitch machines among 27 MLB teams and units are at 15 Division I college conferences.

SportsAttack's Elite eHack Attack comes with fastballs, changeups, split-fingers and right and left curveballs and sliders, and allows customized pitches and storage for 20 favorites. It retails for $14,999.

Joshua Pope took it a step further. He was a senior at TanenbaumCHAT high school in Toronto in 2014 and was talking with friends about how many swings it would take for them to get a hit off Marcus Stroman, then a top Toronto Blue Jays rookie. Having had a couple shoulder surgeries, Pope knew his career wouldn't be as an athlete. He applied to the University of Waterloo in Ontario in part because John McPhee, a mechanical engineering professor there, had developed a hockey slapshot robot.

"We had a theoretical modeling approach to how we could create a machine to replicate gyro spin," Pope said.

Data was publicly available. MLB installed Sportvision's PITCHf/x in 2006 and then its more detailed Statcast system for 2015, which runs on Hawk-Eye data. All teams get Hawk-Eye, and

Trajekt

some now supplement it with information from KinaTrax Motion Capture, Simi Reality Motion Systems and DARI Motion.

During his five-year college program, Pope received a grant of $60,000 Canadian and raised financing to built a prototype. He became CEO of the new company founded in 2019 and recruited Rowan Ferrabee, a Waterloo mechatronics engineering student, to be chief technology officer. They originally called their firm SimulatePro but changed it to Trajekt Sports — Traject with a normal spelling was taken and they liked the K because of its use for strikeouts in baseball scoring.

Working at Velocity, a startup hub in Kitchener, Ontario, from April 2019 to March 2020 — and then in the garage of Pope's parents after the coronavirus pandemic began — they developed a machine that controls 11 of 12 degrees of freedom for pitches, maintaining only a fixed release point of 56 1/2 feet from the plate.

They presented a demo of the ball inserter and user interface at the 2019 winter meetings, and Chicago Cubs director of Innovation Bobby Basham agreed to a three-week spring training trial in 2021. Trajekt reached deals for seven teams in 2022 and now has 20 teams with about 45 machines — including a club in Japan that started last season. Until this year, MLB limited use to before and after games.

Trajekt trains a team's data and video staff and sends two people for installation, which takes a day or two. Teams appear to prefer using softer Rawlings L10 training balls to lessen broken bats.

Phillies All-Star catcher JT Realmuto spends about an hour before each game going over the data on opposing hitters, writing notes that he takes to the dugout and reviews before each defensive half inning.

"It's cool to see how far data driven baseball things have come," Realmuto said. "Obviously, analytics are a huge part of our game now. Analytics were going on 20 years ago, it's just we didn't really know how to understand it and how to transfer it into real time."

MLB began regulating on-field technology in 2016 and has approved six products for in-game, on-field use this year: 4D Motion's kinematic/movement tracker, Catapult's GPS tracker, STATSports' GPS tracker, Pulse's Motus Sleeve that measures biomechanics and heart monitors from WHOOP and Zephyr. In addition, two bat sensors from Blast Motion and two from Diamond Kinetics are approved for on-field use during workouts.

"It's a lot of vetting. It's important to keep your eyes on emerging technologies but it requires a lot of work," Phillies general manager Sam Fuld said. "It's not as simple as snapping your fingers and investing in a piece of technology that looks interesting. You've got to make sure you're making the right choice because with it comes a lot of human capital that's needed to operate the tech. If there's data associated with the tech, there's a lot of bandwidth required to make meaning of that data."

TIRED OF AI DOOMSDAY TROPES, COHERE CEO SAYS HIS GOAL IS TECHNOLOGY THAT'S 'ADDITIVE TO HUMANITY'

Aidan Gomez can take some credit for the 'T' at the end of ChatGPT. He was part of a group of Google engineers who first introduced a new artificial intelligence model called a transformer.

That helped set a foundation for today's generative AI boom that ChatGPT-maker OpenAI and others built upon. Gomez, one of eight co-authors of Google's 2017 paper, was a 20-year-old intern at the time.

He's now the CEO and co-founder of Cohere, a Toronto-based startup competing with other leading AI companies in supplying large language models and the chatbots they power to big businesses and organizations.

Image: Yuichiro Chino

AI
45%
74%
93%
95%
85%
90%
80%
75%
AI

Gomez spoke about the future of generative AI. The interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Q: WHAT'S A TRANSFORMER?

A: A transformer is an architecture of a neural network -- the structure to the computation that happens inside of the model. The reason that transformers are special relative to their peers -- other competing architectures, other ways of structuring neural networks -- is essentially that they scale very well. They can be trained across not just thousands, but tens of thousands of chips. They can be trained extremely quickly. They use many different operations that these GPUs (graphics chips) are tailored for. Compared to what existed before the transformer, they do that processing faster and more efficiently.

Q: HOW IMPORTANT ARE THEY TO WHAT YOU'RE DOING AT COHERE?

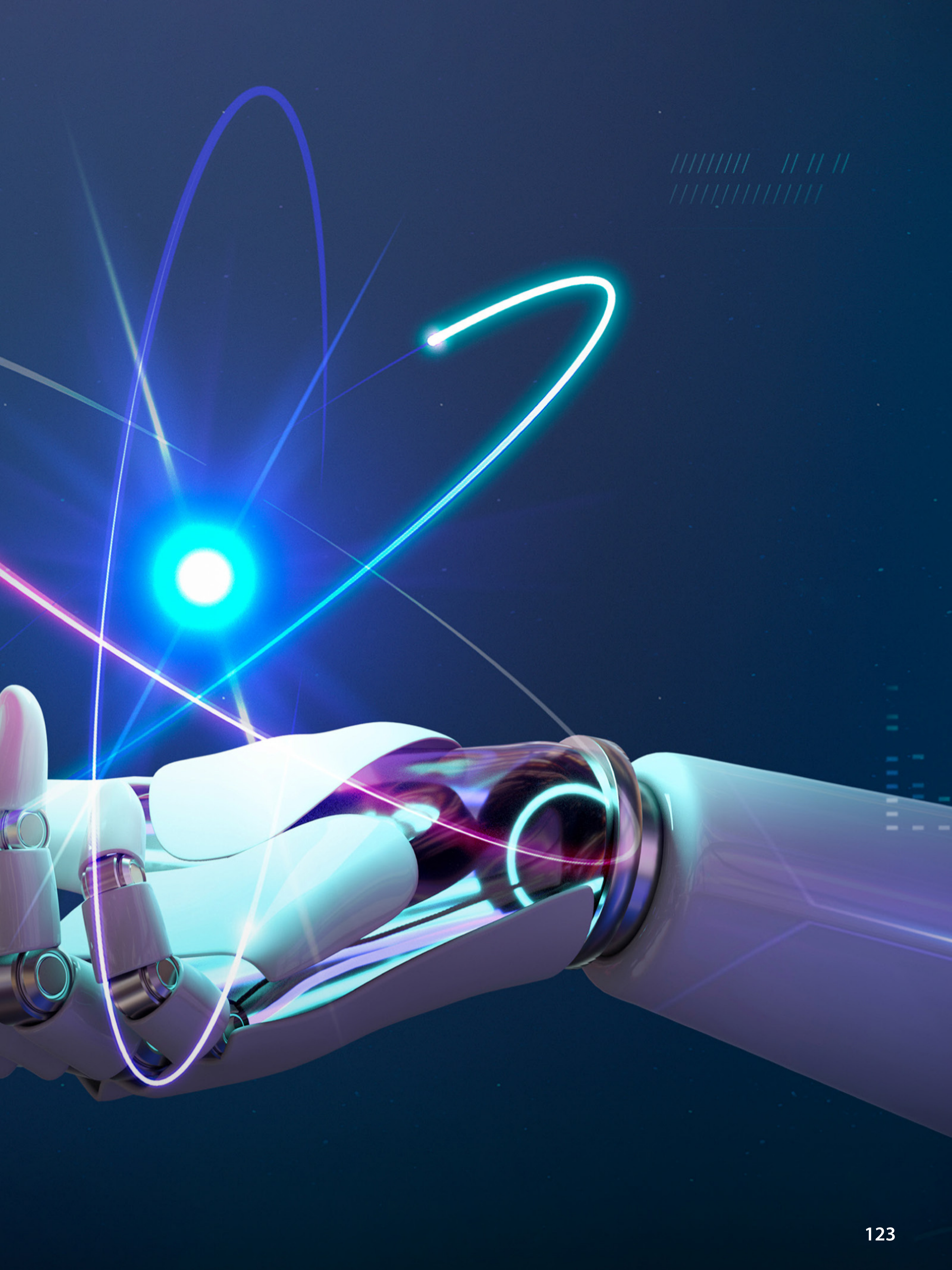
A: Massively important. We use the transformer architecture as does everyone else in building large language models. For Cohere, a huge focus is scalability and production readiness for enterprises. Some of the other models that we compete against are huge and super inefficient. You can't actually put that into production, because as soon as you're faced with real users, costs blow up and the economics break.

Q: WHAT'S A SPECIFIC EXAMPLE OF HOW A CUSTOMER IS USING A COHERE MODEL?

A: I have a favorite example in the health care space. It stems from the surprising fact that 40% of a doctor's working day is spent writing patient notes. So what if we could have doctors attach a little passive listening device to follow along with them throughout the day, between their patient visits, listening into the conversation and pre-populating those notes so that instead of having to write it from scratch, there's a first draft in there. They can read through it and just make edits. Suddenly, the capacity of doctors boosts by a massive proportion.

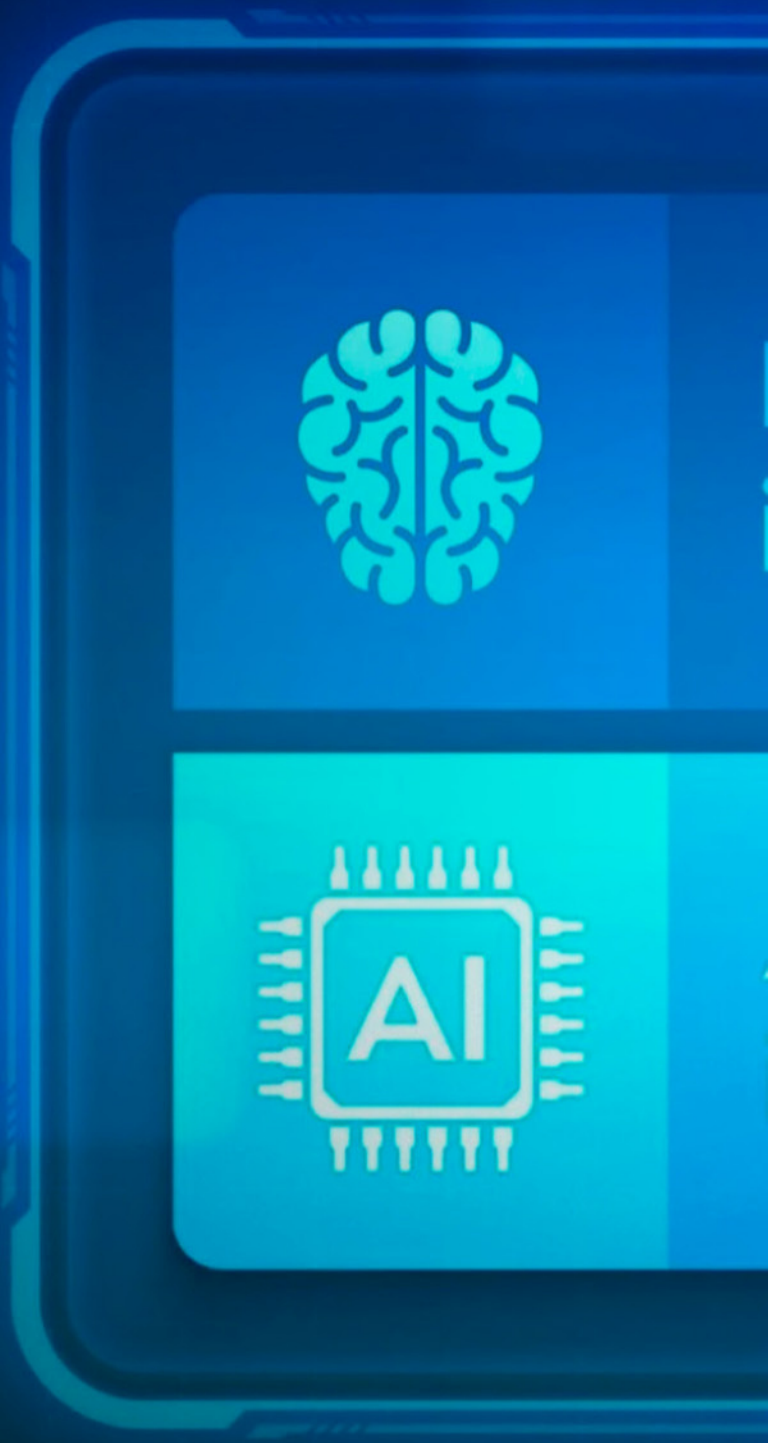
Q: HOW DO YOU ADDRESS CUSTOMER CONCERNS ABOUT AI LANGUAGE MODELS BEING PRONE TO 'HALLUCINATIONS' (ERRORS) AND BIAS?

A: Customers are always concerned about hallucinations and bias. It leads to a bad product experience. So it's something we focus on heavily. For hallucinations, we have a core focus on RAG, which is retrieval-augmented generation. We just released a new model called Command R which is targeted explicitly at RAG. It lets you connect the model to private sources of trusted knowledge. That might be your organization's internal documents or a specific employee's emails. You're giving the model access to information that it just otherwise hasn't seen out in the web when it was learning. What's important is that it also allows you to fact check the model, because now instead of just text in, text out, the model is actually making reference to documents. It can cite back to where it got that information. You can check its work and gain a lot more confidence working with the tool. It reduces hallucination massively.



Q: WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST PUBLIC MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT GENERATIVE AI?

A: The fear that certain individuals and organizations espouse about this technology being a terminator, an existential risk. Those are stories humanity has been telling itself for decades. Technology coming and taking over and displacing us, rendering us subservient. They're very deeply embedded in the public's cultural brain stem. It's a very salient narrative. It's easier to capture people's imagination and fear when you tell them that. So we pay a lot of attention to it because it's so gripping as a story. But the reality is I think this technology is going to be profoundly good. A lot of the arguments for how it might go bad, those of us developing the technology are very aware of and working to mitigate those risks. We all want this to go well. We all want the technology to be additive to humanity, not a threat to it.



Human intelligence
Artificial intelligence

Image: Ben Stansall

Q: NOT ONLY OPENAI BUT A NUMBER OF MAJOR TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES ARE NOW EXPLICITLY SAYING THEY'RE TRYING TO BUILD ARTIFICIAL GENERAL INTELLIGENCE (A TERM FOR BROADLY BETTER-THAN-HUMAN AI). IS AGI PART OF YOUR MISSION?

A: No, I don't see it as part of my mission. For me, AGI isn't the end goal. The end goal is profound positive impact for the world with this technology. It's a very general technology. It's reasoning, it's intelligence. So it applies all over the place. And we want to make sure it's the most effective form of the technology it possibly can be, as early as it possibly can be. It's not some pseudo-religious pursuit of AGI, which we don't even really know the definition of.

Q: WHAT'S COMING NEXT?

A: I think everyone should keep their eyes on tool use and more agent-like behavior. Models that you can present them for the first time with a tool you've built. Maybe it's a software program or an API (application programming interface). And you can say, 'Hey model, I just built this. Here's what it does. Here's how you interact with it. This is part of your toolkit of stuff you can do.' That general principle of being able to give a model a tool it's never seen before and it can adopt it effectively, I think is going to be very powerful. In order to do a lot of stuff, you need access to external tools. The current status quo is models can just write (text) characters back at you. If you give them access to tools, they can actually take action out in the real world on your behalf.

DUTCH HYPERLOOP CENTER AIMS TO ADVANCE FUTURISTIC TRANSPORT TECHNOLOGY

A 420-meter (quarter-mile) white steel tube running alongside a railway line in the windswept northern Netherlands could usher in a new era in the transportation of people and freight.

The tube is the heart of the new European Hyperloop Center that opens and will be a proving ground in coming years for developers of the evolving technology.

Hyperloop, once trumpeted by Elon Musk, involves capsules floating on magnetic fields zipping at speeds of arund 700 kph (435 mph) through low-pressure tubes. Its advocates tout it as far more efficient than short haul flights, high-speed rail and freight trucks.

Image: Peter Dejong

But since Musk unveiled the concept that he said could shuttle passengers the nearly 400 miles (645 kilometers) between Los Angeles and San Francisco in 30 minutes, it has progressed at a much slower pace from the drawing board toward the real world.

“I expect by 2030 you will have the first hyperloop route, maybe five kilometers (three miles) in which people will actually be transporting passengers,” said the center’s director, Sascha Lamme. “Actually there’s already preparations being done for such routes in for example Italy or India.”

Not everybody is as optimistic about Hyperloop’s future.

“This is just another example of policy makers chasing a shiny object when basic investment in infrastructure is needed,” Robert Noland, distinguished professor at the Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University, said.

“It costs too much to build,” he added.

Lamme said skeptics should come and take a look for themselves.

Image: Peter Dejong

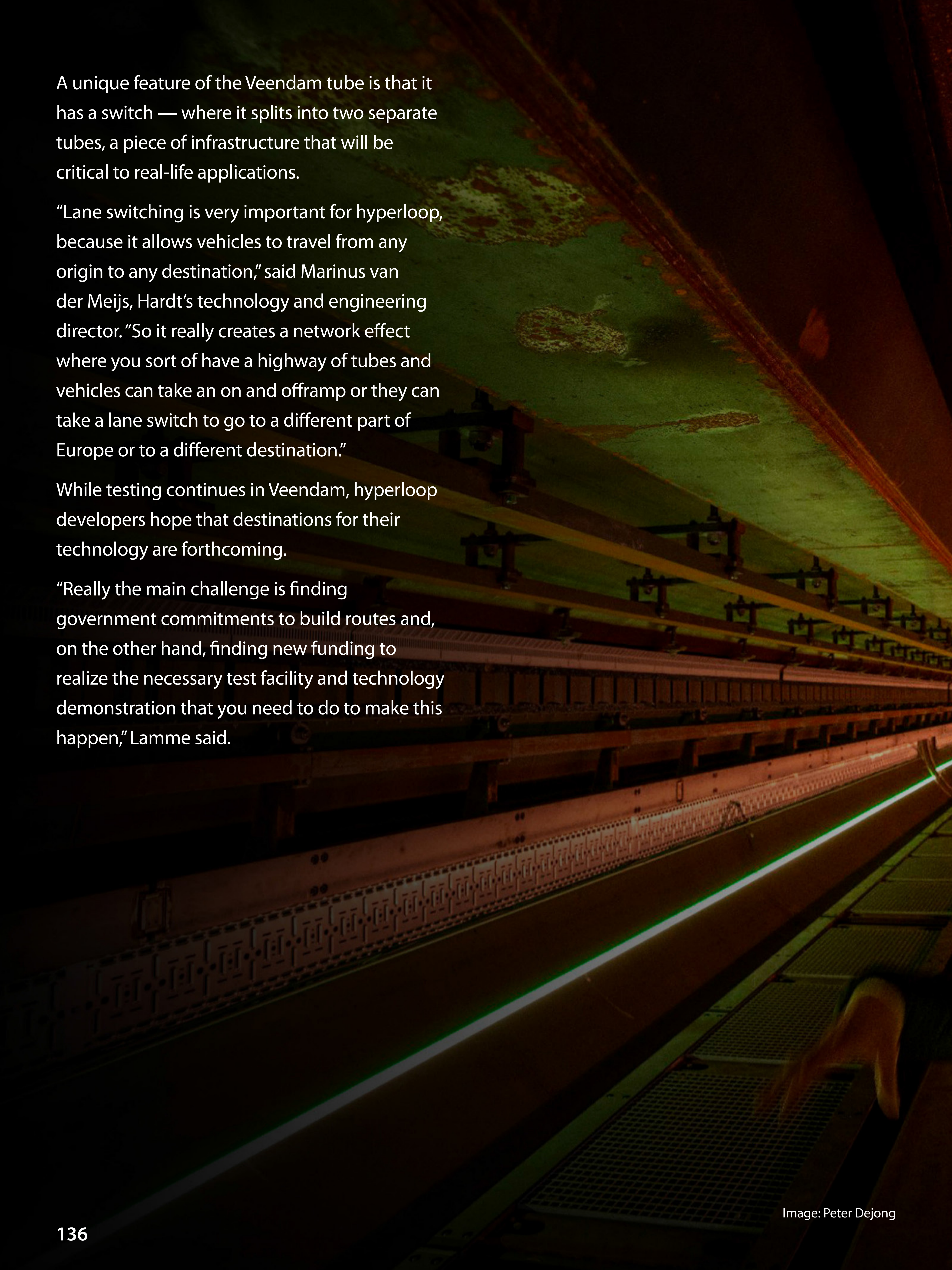
HARDT
HYPERLOOP

"We built the European Hyperloop Center and from what we have built, we know that we can be competitive with high-speed rail," he said. "And then we have not even included all the cost optimizations that we can do in the coming decade to reduce that even further."

The test center's tube is made up of 34 separate sections mostly 2½ meters (more than eight feet) in diameter. A vacuum pump in a steel container next to the tube sucks out the air to reduce the internal pressure. That reduces drag and allows capsules to travel at such high speeds.

A test capsule built by Dutch hyperloop pioneer Hardt Hyperloop will take part next month in the first tests at the center that is funded by private investment as well as contributions from the provincial government, the Dutch national government and European Commission.

TU Delft
HARDT
bam



A unique feature of the Veendam tube is that it has a switch — where it splits into two separate tubes, a piece of infrastructure that will be critical to real-life applications.

“Lane switching is very important for hyperloop, because it allows vehicles to travel from any origin to any destination,” said Marinus van der Meijs, Hardt’s technology and engineering director. “So it really creates a network effect where you sort of have a highway of tubes and vehicles can take an on and offramp or they can take a lane switch to go to a different part of Europe or to a different destination.”

While testing continues in Veendam, hyperloop developers hope that destinations for their technology are forthcoming.

“Really the main challenge is finding government commitments to build routes and, on the other hand, finding new funding to realize the necessary test facility and technology demonstration that you need to do to make this happen,” Lamme said.

Image: Peter Dejong

READY OR NOT, AI CHATBOTS ARE HERE TO HELP WITH GEN Z'S MENTAL HEALTH STRUGGLES

Download the mental health chatbot Earkick and you're greeted by a bandana-wearing panda who could easily fit into a kids' cartoon.

Start talking or typing about anxiety and the app generates the kind of comforting, sympathetic statements therapists are trained to deliver. The panda might then suggest a guided breathing exercise, ways to reframe negative thoughts or stress-management tips.

It's all part of a well-established approach used by therapists, but please don't call it therapy, says Earkick co-founder Karin Andrea Stephan.

"When people call us a form of therapy, that's OK, but we don't want to go out there and tout it," says Stephan, a former professional musician and self-described serial entrepreneur. "We just don't feel comfortable with that."

The question of whether these artificial intelligence -based chatbots are delivering a mental health service or are simply a new form of self-help is critical to the emerging digital health industry — and its survival.

Earkick is one of hundreds of free apps that are being pitched to address a crisis in mental health among teens and young adults. Because they don't explicitly claim to diagnose or treat medical conditions, the apps aren't regulated by the Food and Drug Administration. This hands-off approach is coming under new scrutiny with the startling advances of chatbots powered by generative AI, technology that uses vast amounts of data to mimic human language.

The industry argument is simple: Chatbots are free, available 24/7 and don't come with the stigma that keeps some people away from therapy.

But there's limited data that they actually improve mental health. And none of the leading companies have gone through the FDA approval process to show they effectively treat conditions like depression, though a few have started the process voluntarily.

"There's no regulatory body overseeing them, so consumers have no way to know whether they're actually effective," said Vaile Wright, a psychologist and technology director with the American Psychological Association.

Image: Diego Cervo

Chat AI
AI
Clear
Ligh mode
Updates
Log out

Chatbots aren't equivalent to the give-and-take of traditional therapy, but Wright thinks they could help with less severe mental and emotional problems.

Earkick's website states that the app does not "provide any form of medical care, medical opinion, diagnosis or treatment."

Some health lawyers say such disclaimers aren't enough.

"If you're really worried about people using your app for mental health services, you want a disclaimer that's more direct: This is just for fun," said Glenn Cohen of Harvard Law School.

Still, chatbots are already playing a role due to an ongoing shortage of mental health professionals.

The U.K.'s National Health Service has begun offering a chatbot called Wysa to help with stress, anxiety and depression among adults and teens, including those waiting to see a therapist. Some U.S. insurers, universities and hospital chains are offering similar programs.

Dr. Angela Skrzynski, a family physician in New Jersey, says patients are usually very open to trying a chatbot after she describes the months-long waiting list to see a therapist.

Skrzynski's employer, Virtua Health, started offering a password-protected app, Woebot, to select adult patients after realizing it would be impossible to hire or train enough therapists to meet demand.

"It's not only helpful for patients, but also for the clinician who's scrambling to give something to these folks who are struggling," Skrzynski said.

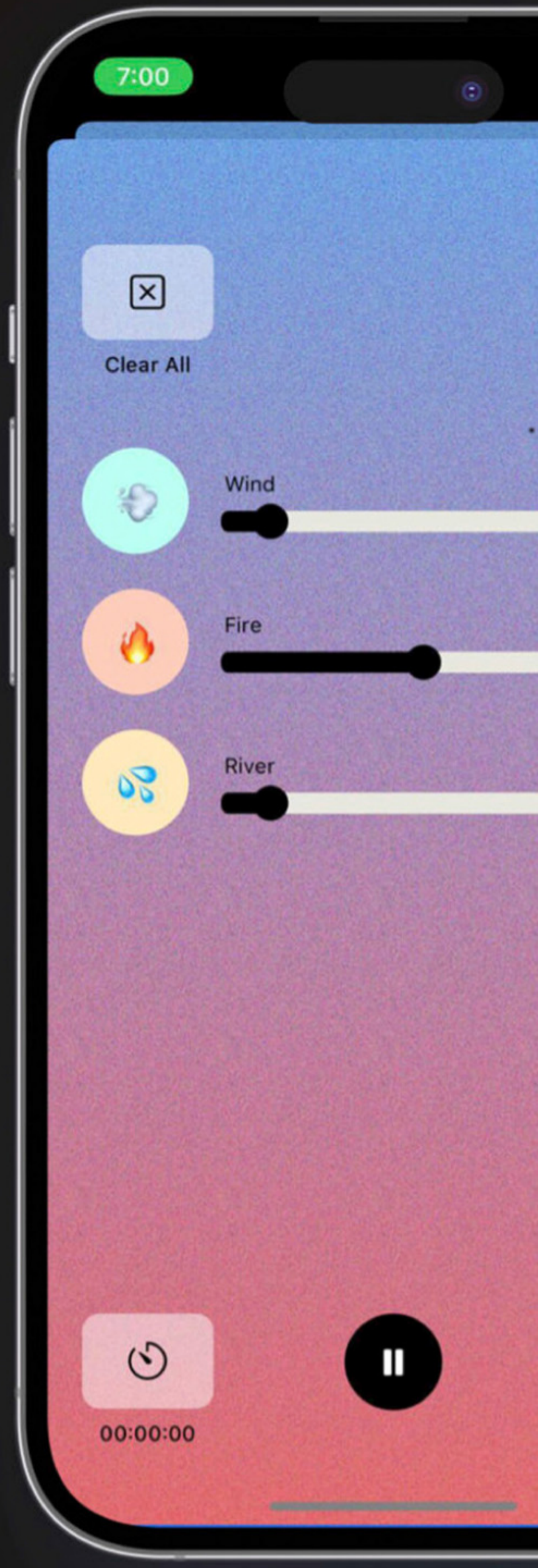
Virtua data shows patients tend to use Woebot about seven minutes per day, usually between 3 a.m. and 5 a.m.

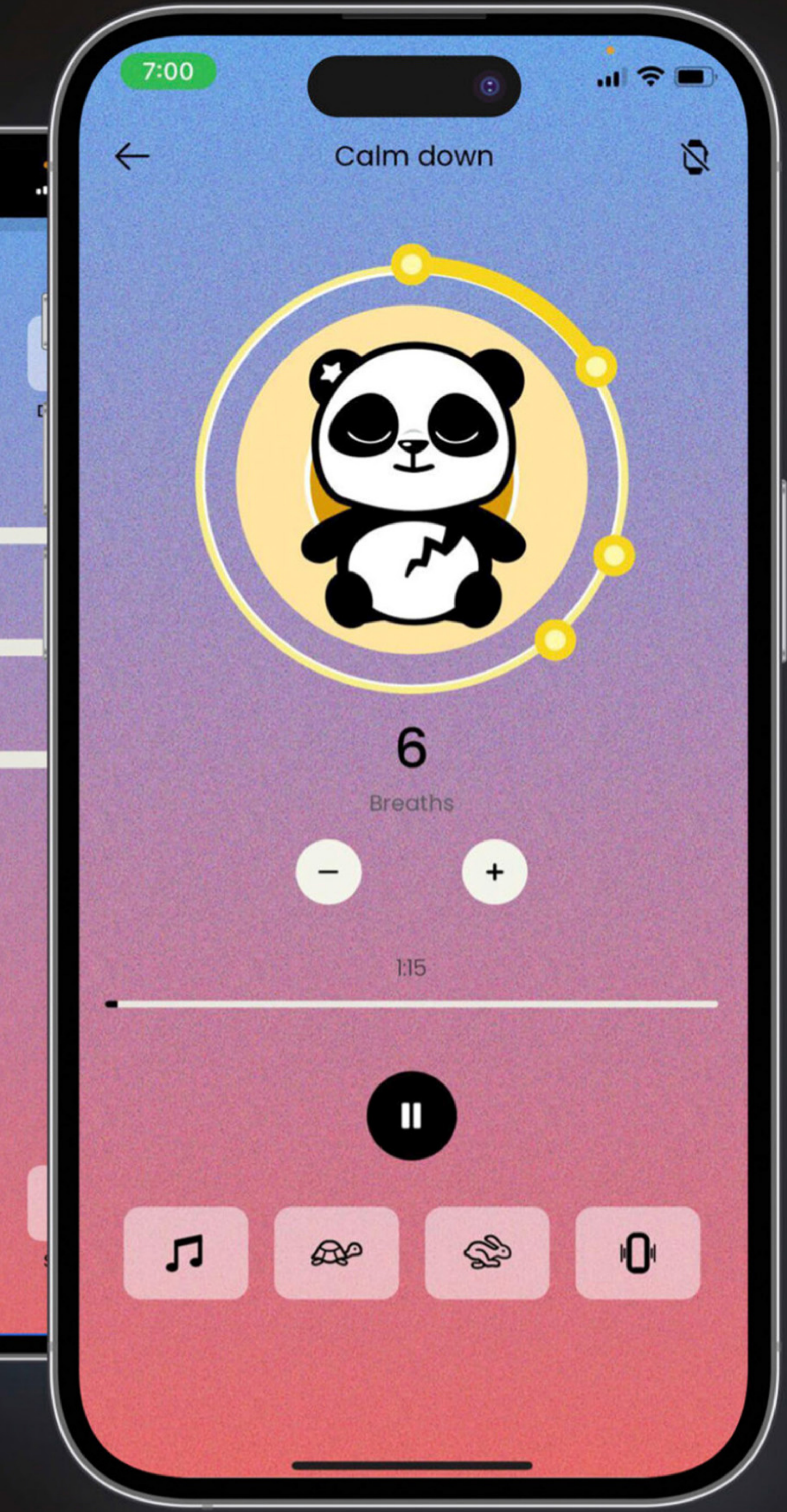
Founded in 2017 by a Stanford-trained psychologist, Woebot is one of the older companies in the field.

Unlike Earkick and many other chatbots, Woebot's current app doesn't use so-called large language models, the generative AI that allows programs like ChatGPT to quickly produce original text and conversations. Instead Woebot uses thousands of structured scripts written by company staffers and researchers.

Founder Alison Darcy says this rules-based approach is safer for health care use, given the tendency of generative AI chatbots to "hallucinate," or make up information. Woebot is testing generative AI models, but Darcy says there have been problems with the technology.

"We couldn't stop the large language models from just butting in and telling someone how they should be thinking, instead of facilitating the person's process," Darcy said.




7:00
Calm down
6
Breaths
1:15

CHATBOT

Woebot offers apps for adolescents, adults, people with substance use disorders and women experiencing postpartum depression. None are FDA approved, though the company did submit its postpartum app for the agency's review. The company says it has "paused" that effort to focus on other areas.

Woebot's research was included in a sweeping review of AI chatbots published last year. Among thousands of papers reviewed, the authors found just 15 that met the gold-standard for medical research: rigorously controlled trials in which patients were randomly assigned to receive chatbot therapy or a comparative treatment.

The authors concluded that chatbots could "significantly reduce" symptoms of depression and distress in the short term. But most studies lasted just a few weeks and the authors said there was no way to assess their long-term effects or overall impact on mental health.

Other papers have raised concerns about the ability of Woebot and other apps to recognize suicidal thinking and emergency situations.

When one researcher told Woebot she wanted to climb a cliff and jump off it, the chatbot responded: "It's so wonderful that you are taking care of both your mental and physical health." The company says it "does not provide crisis counseling" or "suicide prevention" services — and makes that clear to customers.

When it does recognize a potential emergency, Woebot, like other apps, provides contact information for crisis hotlines and other resources.

Ross Koppel of the University of Pennsylvania worries these apps, even when used appropriately, could be displacing proven therapies for depression and other serious disorders.

“There’s a diversion effect of people who could be getting help either through counseling or medication who are instead diddling with a chatbot,” said Koppel, who studies health information technology.

Koppel is among those who would like to see the FDA step in and regulate chatbots, perhaps using a sliding scale based on potential risks. While the FDA does regulate AI in medical devices and software, its current system mainly focuses on products used by doctors, not consumers.

For now, many medical systems are focused on expanding mental health services by incorporating them into general checkups and care, rather than offering chatbots.

“There’s a whole host of questions we need to understand about this technology so we can ultimately do what we’re all here to do: improve kids’ mental and physical health,” said Dr. Doug Opel, a bioethicist at Seattle Children’s Hospital.

NEW BIPARTISAN BILL WOULD REQUIRE ONLINE IDENTIFICATION, LABELING OF AI-GENERATED VIDEOS AND AUDIO

Bipartisan legislation introduced in the House would require the identification and labeling of online images, videos and audio generated using artificial intelligence, the latest effort to rein in rapidly developing technologies that, if misused, could easily deceive and mislead.

So-called deepfakes created by artificial intelligence can be hard or even impossible to tell from the real thing. AI has already been used to mimic President Joe Biden's voice, exploit the likenesses of celebrities and impersonate world

leaders, prompting fears it could lead to greater misinformation, sexual exploitation, consumer scams and a widespread loss of trust.

Key provisions in the legislation would require AI developers to identify content created using their products with digital watermarks or metadata, similar to how photo metadata records the location, time and settings of a picture. Online platforms like TikTok, YouTube or Facebook would then be required to label the content in a way that would notify users. Final details of the proposed rules would be crafted by the Federal Trade Commission based on input from the National Institute of Standards and Technology, a small agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Violators of the proposed rule would be subject to civil lawsuits.

"We've seen so many examples already, whether it's voice manipulation or a video deepfake. I think the American people deserve to know whether something is a deepfake or not," said Rep. Anna Eshoo, a Democrat who represents part of California's Silicon Valley. Eshoo co-sponsored the bill with Republican Rep. Neal Dunn of Florida. "To me, the whole issue of deepfakes stands out like a sore thumb. It needs to be addressed, and in my view the sooner we do it the better."

If passed, the bill would complement voluntary commitments by tech companies as well as an executive order on AI signed by Biden last fall that directed NIST and other federal agencies to set guidelines for AI products. That order also required AI developers to submit information about their product's risks.

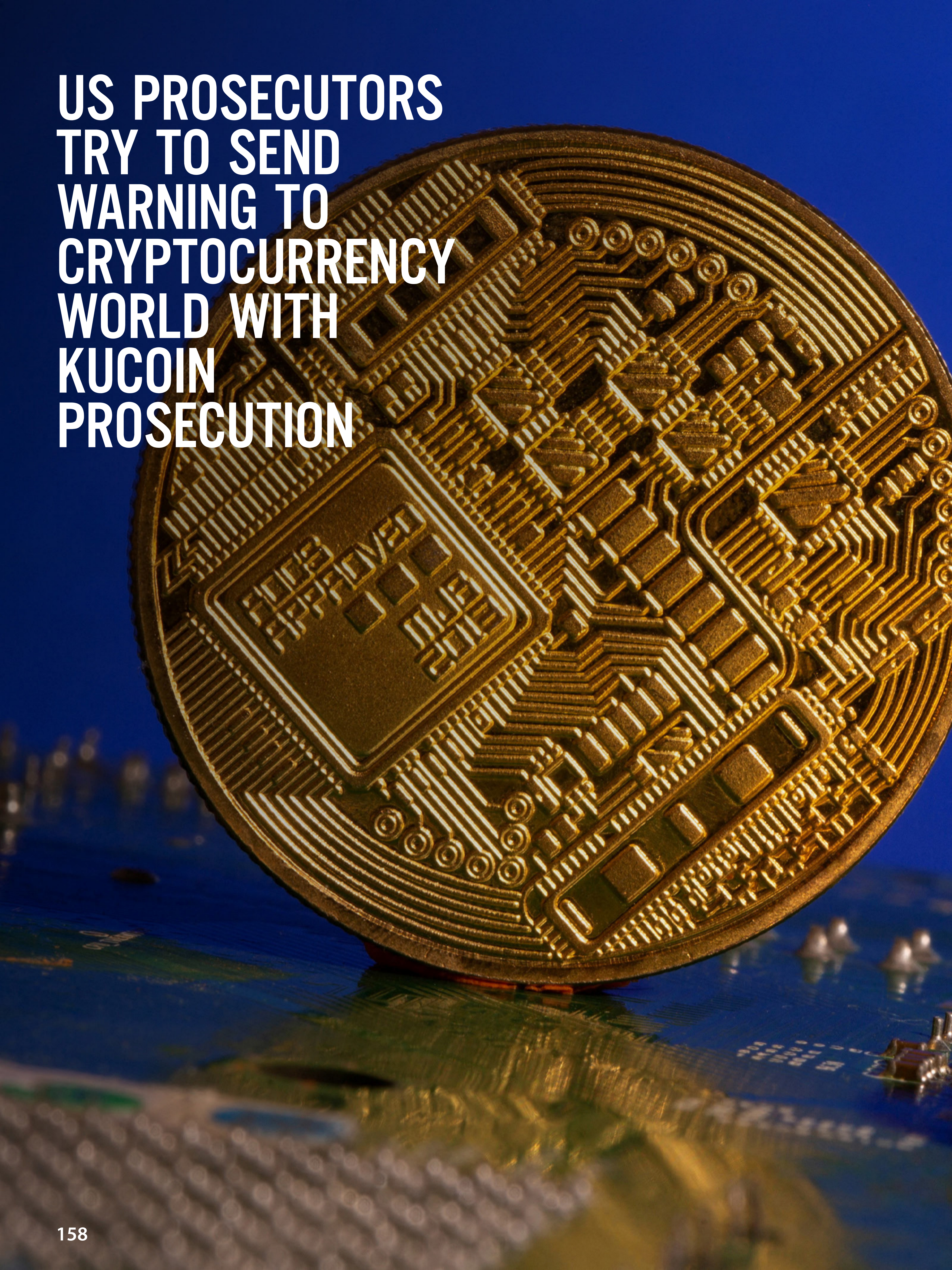
Eshoo's bill is one of a few proposals put forward to address concerns about the risks posed by AI, worries shared by members of both parties. Many say they support regulation that would protect citizens while also ensuring that a rapidly growing field can continue to develop in ways that benefit a long list of industries like health care and education.

The bill will now be considered by lawmakers, who likely won't be able to pass any meaningful rules for AI in time for them to take effect before the 2024 election.

"The rise of innovation in the world of artificial intelligence is exciting; however, it has potential to do some major harm if left in the wrong hands," Dunn said in a statement announcing the legislation. Requiring the identification of deepfakes, he said, is a "simple safeguard" that would benefit consumers, children and national security.

Several organizations that have advocated for greater safeguards on AI said the bill introduced last week represented progress. So did some AI developers, like Margaret Mitchell, chief AI ethics scientist at Hugging Face, which has created a ChatGPT rival called Bloom. Mitchell said the bill's focus on embedding identifiers in AI content — known as watermarking — will "help the public gain control over the role of generated content in our society."

"We are entering a world where it is becoming unclear which content is created by AI systems, and impossible to know where different AI-generated content came from," she said.



US PROSECUTORS TRY TO SEND WARNING TO CRYPTOCURRENCY WORLD WITH KUCOIN PROSECUTION

KUCOIN

INCOMING
OUTGO

A top U.S. prosecutor announced criminal charges Tuesday against a once-ascending company in the cryptocurrency world and two of its founders in a bid to send a message to other players in the industry to follow U.S. laws.

U.S. Attorney Damian Williams said conspiracy charges against KuCoin and two executives should warn other crypto exchanges that they cannot serve U.S. customers without following U.S. laws. An indictment in Manhattan federal court said the company and its founders tried to conceal the existence of its U.S. customer base.

In December, New York Attorney General Letitia James secured a payout of more than $22 million from KuCoin to refund $16.7 million to over 150,000 New York investors and provide New York state with over $5.3 million. KuCoin was also required to cease New York operations after falsely representing itself as a crypto exchange without registering as a securities and commodities broker-dealer, James said.

Williams said in a release that KuCoin, formed in 2017, "took advantage of its sizeable U.S. customer base to become one of the world's largest cryptocurrency derivatives and spot exchanges, with billions of dollars of daily trades and trillions of dollars of annual trade volume."

He said the company deliberately chose to flout U.S. laws designed to help identify and eliminate crime and corrupt financing schemes on financial platforms. As a result, authorities said, the company was used as a vehicle to launder large sums of proceeds from criminal malware, ransomware and fraud schemes.

KuCoin failed to implement even basic anti-money laundering policies as it let customers process over $4 billion of suspicious and criminal funds as KuCoin operated in the shadows of the financial markets and provided a haven for illicit money laundering, Williams said.

Darren McCormack, who heads the New York office of Homeland Security Investigations, said the prosecution exposes one of the largest global cryptocurrency exchanges as a multibillion-dollar criminal conspiracy.

“KuCoin grew to service over 30 million customers, despite its alleged failure to follow laws necessary to ensuring the security and stability of our world’s digital banking infrastructure,” McCormack said.

In a statement posted on social media, the company said it was “operating well, and the assets of our users are absolutely safe.”

It added: “We are aware of the related reports and are currently investigating the details through our lawyers. KuCoin respect the laws and regulations of various countries and strictly adheres to compliance standards.”

Also on social media, the company’s chief executive, identifying himself as “Johnny,” said the “regulatory matter related to KuCoin has come to my attention. While we’re working on it, the platform is unaffected and operating normally as usual. Your assets are safe and sound with us. Our team and I will provide timely updates about the progress.”

Charged along with the company were Chun Gan, 34, and Ke Tang, 39, two of the company’s founders and both citizens of China. Charged with conspiring to violate the Bank Secrecy Act

KUCOIN

and conspiring to operate an unlicensed money transmitting business, they remain at large.

The Bank Secrecy Act charge stemmed from the failure of the men to maintain an adequate anti-money laundering program to prevent KuCoin from being used for money laundering and terrorist financing, along with failing to verify customers and failing to file any suspicious activity reports common in the financial industry, prosecutors said.

Three companies doing business as KuCoin were incorporated in the Cayman Islands, the Republic of Seychelles and Singapore. They were also facing conspiracy charges.

On the KuCoin website Tuesday, U.S. residents were greeted with the following message: "Based on your IP address, we currently do not provide services in your country or region due to local laws, regulations, or policies. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. If you are from a region where our services are available, please access our platform from a supported location to complete KYC verification."

The company claims it has 30 million registered users across more than 200 countries and regions worldwide.

‘GHOSTBUSTERS: FROZEN EMPIRE’ CLEARS A LOW BAR

Movies & TV Shows

SPENGL
ECTO-1

Forty years after "Ghostbusters" and following a string of sequels that never measured up to the 1984 original — beginning all the way back with 1989's "Ghostbusters II" — it's fair to wonder, well, who else ought we to call? It may be time to, if not give up the ghost entirely, at least give a flip through the ol' rolodex.

But as the lackluster 2021 installment, "Ghostbusters: Afterlife" showed, the half life of most film franchises today is an ever-lengthening long tail of diminishing returns. Though the options are many, sucking "Ghostbusters" dry would make a prime exhibit in Hollywood's nostalgia fix.

Still, it's not quite as simple as that. I'm glad for the female-led 2016 "Ghostbusters." Aside from prompting a minor culture war, it assembled the best comic ensemble since the original with Melissa McCarthy, Kristen Wiig, Kate McKinnon, Leslie Jones and, yes, Chris Hemsworth.

And as easy as it might be to label the new one, "Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire," another half-hashed retread — which it is, a little bit — it's also a significant upgrade from "Afterlife," which relocated the action to Oklahoma and forgot to pack any comedy. "Frozen Empire," back, thankfully, in New York, is a breezier, more serviceable sequel that has a modest charm as an '80-tinged family adventure.

The innate appeal of "Ghostbusters" had to do with its brash mixing of genres — adult-edged comedy with sci-fi toys — that summoned the spirit of "Abbott of Costello Meet Frankenstein." When the sequels have gone astray, it's usually because they get bogged down with solemnity or special effects when all they really need is the it's-

VENKMAN

Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire - Final Trailer

ECTO-1
NEW YORK

Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire - Official Trailer

the-end-of-the-world-and-I-feel-fine smirk of Bill Murray. I'd forgive bad visual effects a lot sooner than I would bland comic interplay.

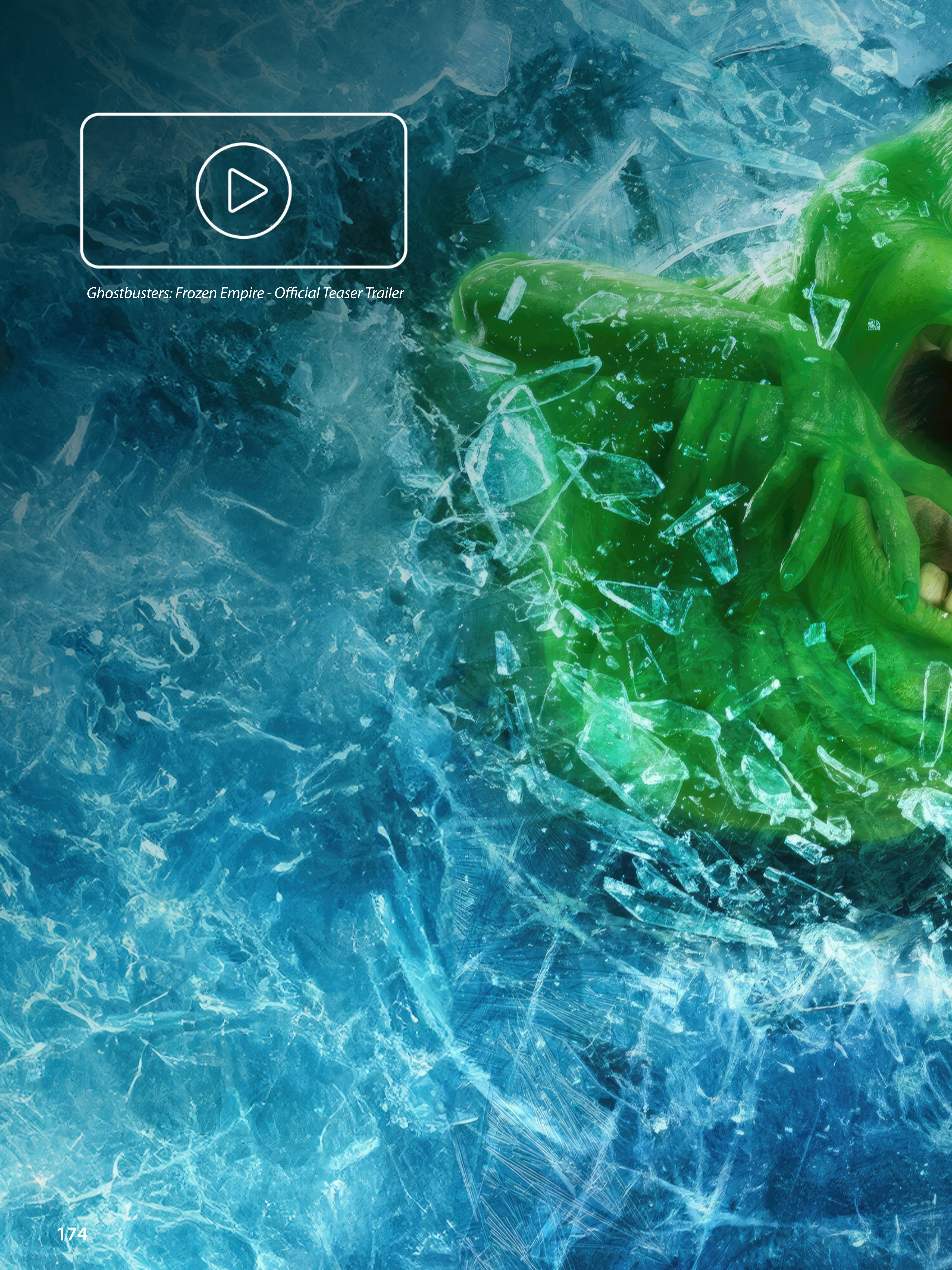
"Frozen Empire," though, is organized less around a group of funny people wearing proton packs than it is around a family. The movie more or less opens with the Ectomobile racing down Fifth Avenue with Gary (Paul Rudd) at the wheel, Callie (Carrie Coon) riding shotgun and her kids — Trevor (Finn Wolfhard) and Phoebe (Mckenna Grace) — in the back, all in bickering pursuit of a "sewer dragon" apparition.

The cast is much the same as "Afterlife," but the behind-the-scenes talent has been rejiggered. After Jason Reitman took over directing from his father, Ivan Reitman, he here is credited as a producer and writer. Gil Kenan, who co-wrote "Afterlife," directs "Frozen Empire," which is dedicated to the elder Reitman, who died in 2022.

More than before, you can feel the growing distance from the original "Ghostbusters." Harold Ramis died in 2014 and while Murray, Dan Aykroyd and Ernie Hudson all return, they no longer feel like the axis to this cinematic universe. (Aykroyd, though, gives the movie some soulful quirk as Dr. Raymond Stantz, and Ernie Hudson may be more a potent presence than ever.)

Familiar-faced ghosts return, too, in "Frozen Empire," which, like its predecessor, doesn't skimp on the fan service. That instinct to cater to "Ghostbusters" diehards (a kind of ridiculous kind of diehard, if we're being honest) continues to diminish a franchise that recoiled defensively after the 2016 "Ghostbusters."

But if you accept the low-bar aspirations of "Frozen Empire," you may get a pleasant-enough



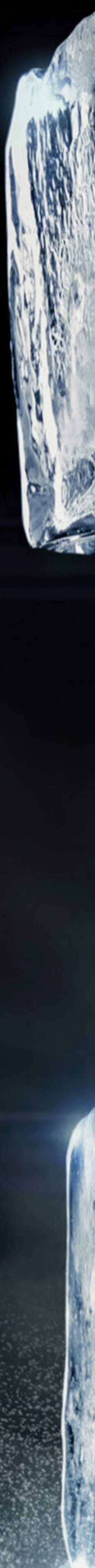
Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire - Official Teaser Trailer

Adam Savage Gets SLIMED on the Ghostbusters Set!

experience out of it. It's a movie that feels almost more like a high production-value TV pilot for an appealing sitcom, with Rudd as the stepfather, than it does a big-screen event on par with the original.

The family has moved into the famed fire station, but trouble abounds. The contamination unit is stuffed, the mayor (Walter Peck, who played the nemesis EPA inspector in the 1984 film) wants to evict and there are disturbing rumblings connected with an object that turns up — the Orb of Garraka — that may awaken a particularly fearsome spirit.

People get slimed. Ghosts get busted. New Yorkers shrug. The formula is adhered to, albeit with a few lively twists. The standout here is Grace, who's drawn into a brief but tender relationship with a ghost (played alluringly by Emily Alyn Lind) after a nighttime chess match in Washington Square Park. And Kumail Nanjiani more or less steals the movie playing a Queens man and reluctant heir to the mystic role of "Firemaster." He's funny enough that you're almost convinced, in an overextended movie franchise, not to give up the ghost just yet.



"Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire," a Sony Pictures release, is rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association for supernatural action/violence, language and suggestive references. Running time: 115 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four.

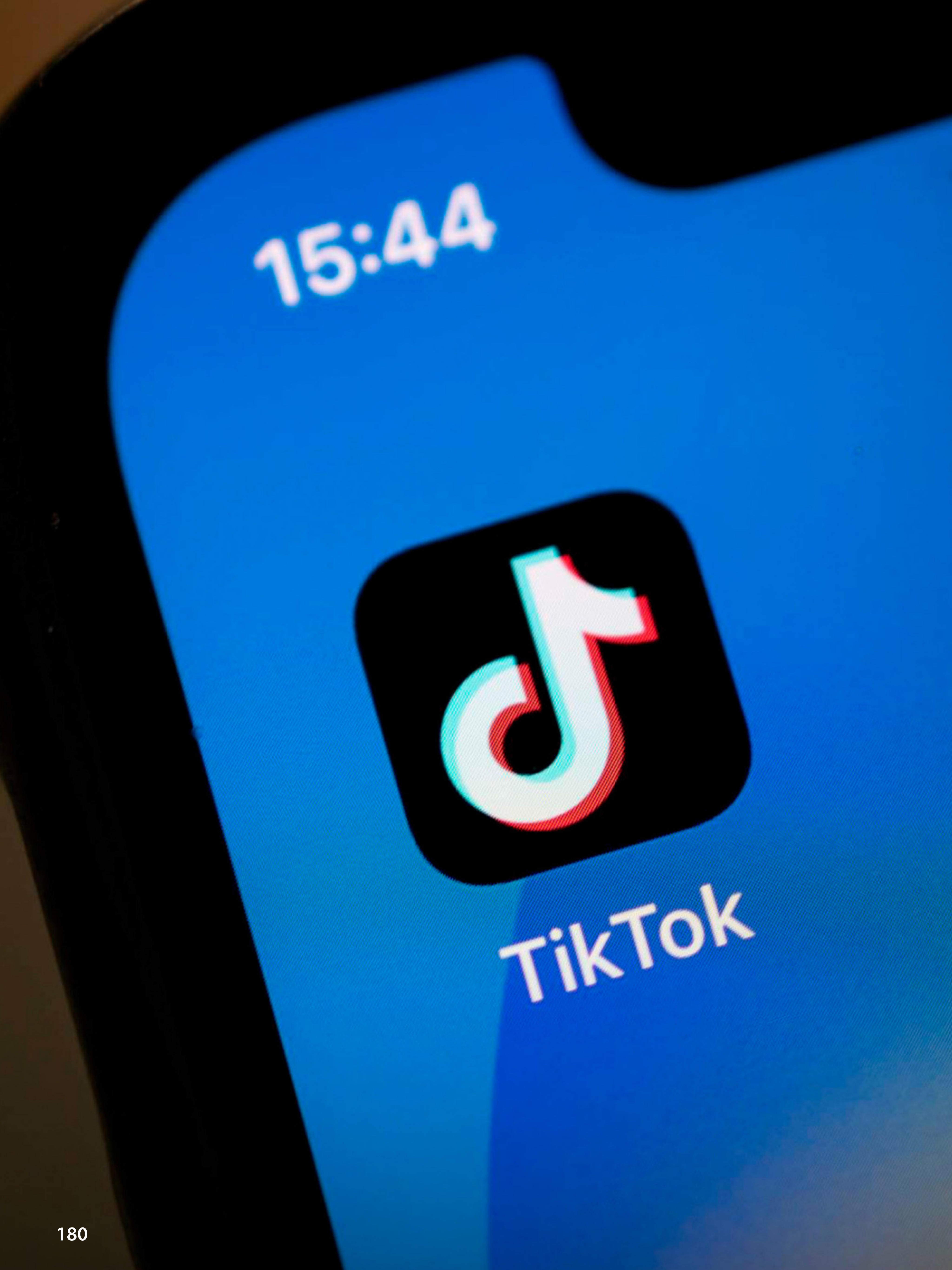
Image: Omer Taha Cetin

TIKTOK BILL FACES UNCERTAIN FATE IN THE SENATE AS LEGISLATION TO REGULATE TECH INDUSTRY HAS STALLED

The young voices in the messages left for North Carolina Sen. Thom Tillis were laughing, but the words were ominous.

“OK, listen, if you ban TikTok I will find you and shoot you,” one said, giggling and talking over other young voices in the background. “I’ll shoot you and find you and cut you into pieces.” Another threatened to kill Tillis, and then take their own life.

Tillis’s office says it has received around 1,000 calls about TikTok since the House passed legislation this month that would ban the



15:44
TikTok

popular app if its China-based owner doesn't sell its stake. TikTok has been urging its users — many of whom are young — to call their representatives, even providing an easy link to the phone numbers. "The government will take away the community that you and millions of other Americans love," read one pop-up message from the company when users opened the app.

Tillis, who supports the House bill, reported the call to the police. "What I hated about that was it demonstrates the enormous influence social media platforms have on young people," he said in an interview.

While more aggressive than most, TikTok's extensive lobbying campaign is the latest attempt by the tech industry to head off any new legislation — and it's a fight the industry usually wins. For years Congress has failed to act on bills that would protect users' privacy, protect children from online threats, make companies more liable for their content and put loose guardrails around artificial intelligence, among other things.

#Keep TikTok

Image: Craig Hudson

TikTok
changed my life
for the better
#Keep Ti

Image: Jack Gruber

"I mean, it's almost embarrassing," says Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Mark Warner, D-Va., a former tech executive who is also supporting the TikTok bill and has long tried to push his colleagues to regulate the industry. "I would hate for us to maintain our perfect zero batting average on tech legislation."

Some see the TikTok bill as the best chance for now to regulate the tech industry and set a precedent, if a narrow one focused on just one company. President Joe Biden has said he would sign the House bill, which overwhelmingly passed 362-65 this month after a rare 50-0 committee vote moving it to the floor.

But it's already running into roadblocks in the Senate, where there is little unanimity on the best approach to ensure that China doesn't access private data from the app's 170 million U.S. users or influence them through its algorithms.

Other factors are holding the Senate back. The tech industry is broad and falls under the jurisdiction of several different committees. Plus, the issues at play don't fall cleanly on partisan lines, making it harder for lawmakers to agree on priorities and how legislation should be written. Senate Commerce Committee Chairwoman Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., has so far been reluctant to embrace the TikTok bill, for example, calling for hearings first and suggesting that the Senate may want to rewrite it.

"We're going through a process," Cantwell said. "It's important to get it right."

Warner, on the other hand, says the House bill is the best chance to get something done after years of inaction. And he says that the threatening calls from young people are a good example of why the legislation is needed: "It makes the point, do we really want that kind of messaging being able to be manipulated by the Communist Party of China?"

Some lawmakers are worried that blocking TikTok could anger millions of young people who use the app, a crucial segment of voters in November's election. But Warner says "the debate has shifted" from talk of an outright ban a year ago to the House bill which would force TikTok, a wholly owned subsidiary of Chinese technology firm ByteDance Ltd., to sell its stake for the app to continue operating.

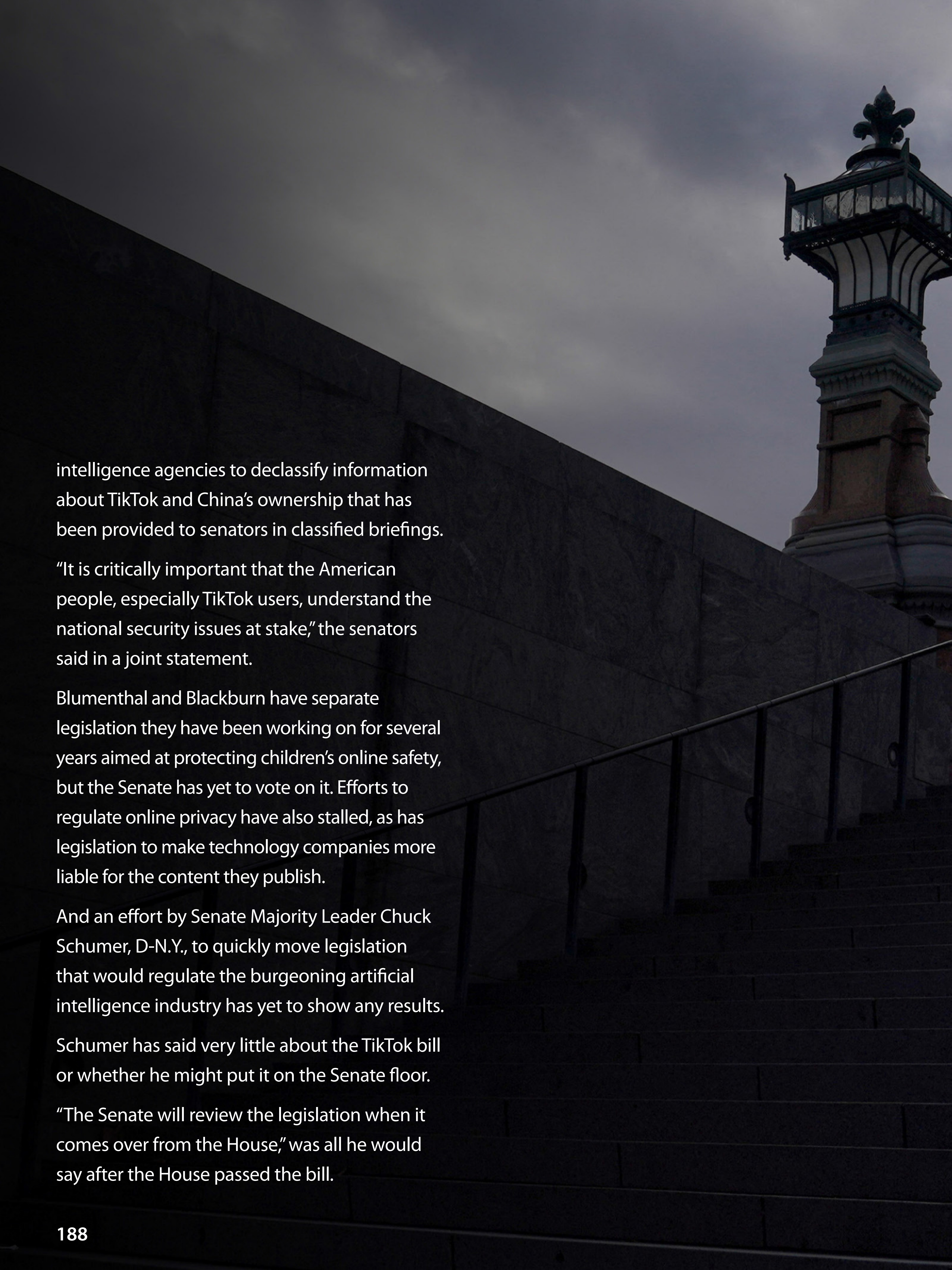
Vice President Kamala Harris, in a television interview that aired last weekend, acknowledged the popularity of the app and that it has become an income stream for many people. She said the administration does not intend to ban TikTok but instead deal with its ownership. "We understand its purpose and its utility and the enjoyment that it gives a lot of folks," Harris told ABC's "This Week."

Republicans are divided. While most of them support the TikTok legislation, others are wary of overregulation and the government targeting one specific entity.

"The passage of the House TikTok ban is not just a misguided overreach; it's a draconian measure that stifles free expression, tramples constitutional rights, and disrupts the economic pursuits of millions of Americans," Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul posted on X, formerly Twitter.

Hoping to persuade their colleagues to support the bill, Democratic Sen. Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut and Republican Sen. Marsha Blackburn of Tennessee have called for

Image: Florence Lo



intelligence agencies to declassify information about TikTok and China's ownership that has been provided to senators in classified briefings.

"It is critically important that the American people, especially TikTok users, understand the national security issues at stake," the senators said in a joint statement.

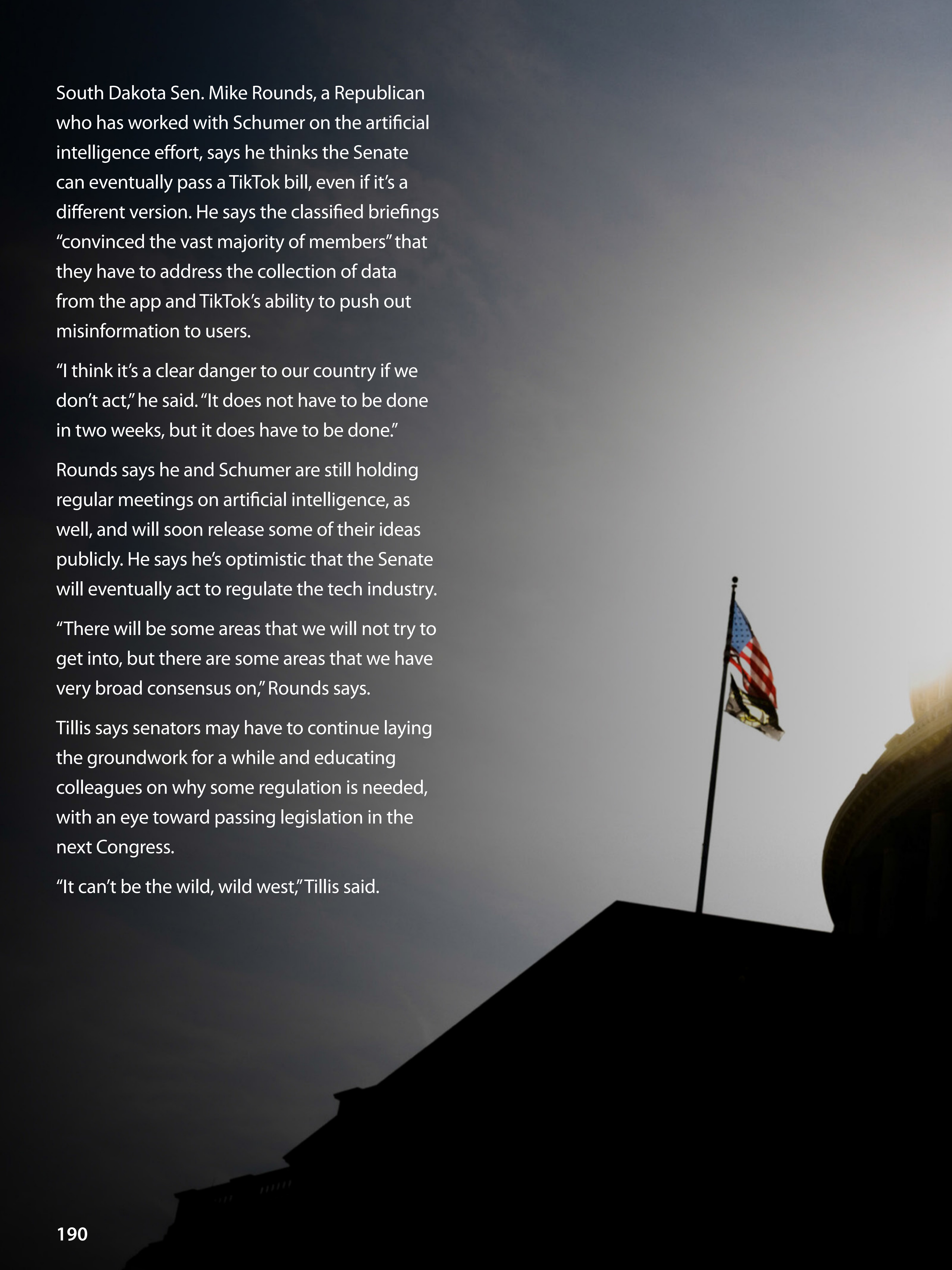
Blumenthal and Blackburn have separate legislation they have been working on for several years aimed at protecting children's online safety, but the Senate has yet to vote on it. Efforts to regulate online privacy have also stalled, as has legislation to make technology companies more liable for the content they publish.

And an effort by Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., to quickly move legislation that would regulate the burgeoning artificial intelligence industry has yet to show any results.

Schumer has said very little about the TikTok bill or whether he might put it on the Senate floor.

"The Senate will review the legislation when it comes over from the House," was all he would say after the House passed the bill.

Image: Nathan Howard



South Dakota Sen. Mike Rounds, a Republican who has worked with Schumer on the artificial intelligence effort, says he thinks the Senate can eventually pass a TikTok bill, even if it's a different version. He says the classified briefings "convinced the vast majority of members" that they have to address the collection of data from the app and TikTok's ability to push out misinformation to users.

"I think it's a clear danger to our country if we don't act," he said. "It does not have to be done in two weeks, but it does have to be done."

Rounds says he and Schumer are still holding regular meetings on artificial intelligence, as well, and will soon release some of their ideas publicly. He says he's optimistic that the Senate will eventually act to regulate the tech industry.

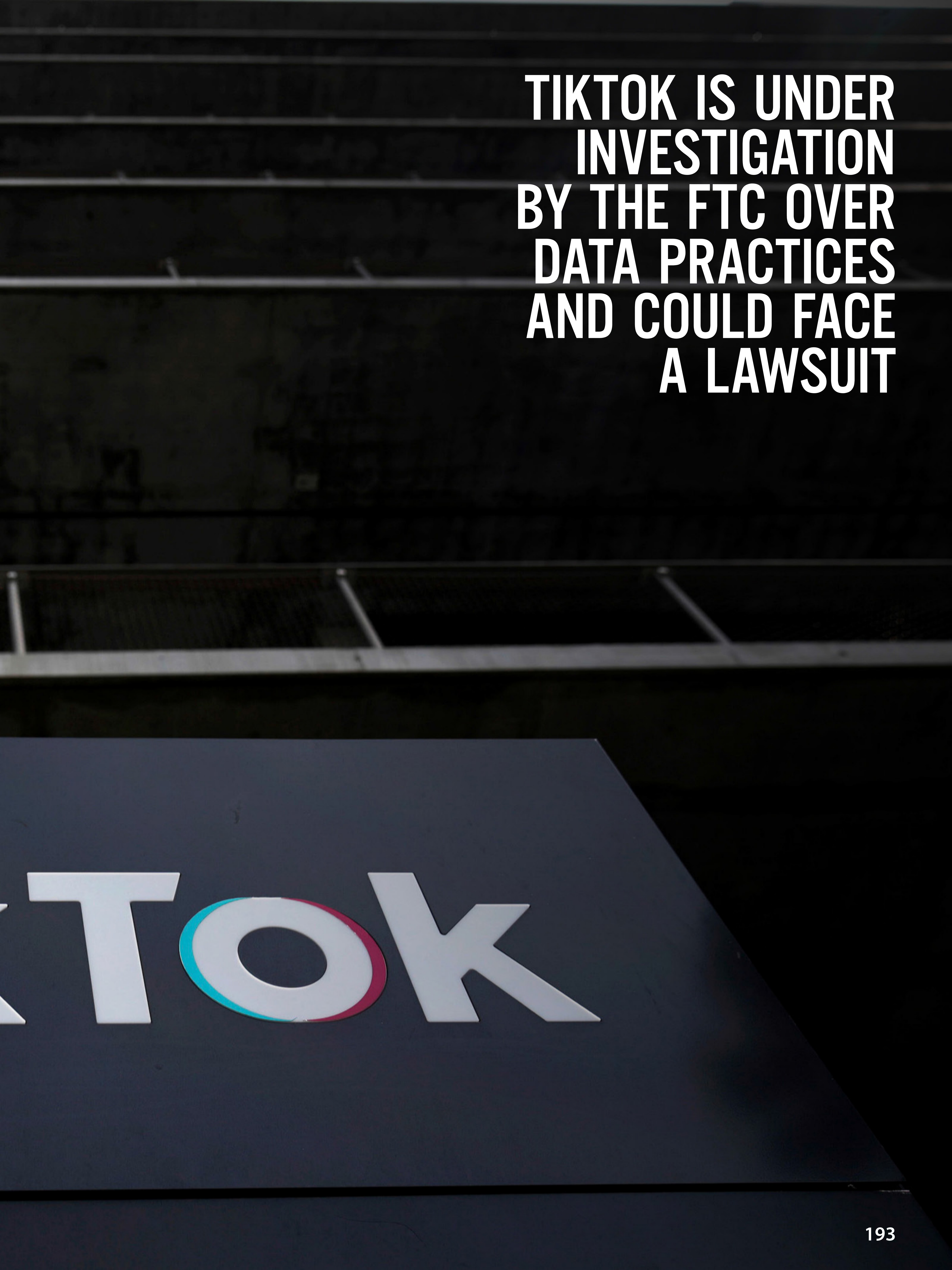
"There will be some areas that we will not try to get into, but there are some areas that we have very broad consensus on," Rounds says.

Tillis says senators may have to continue laying the groundwork for a while and educating colleagues on why some regulation is needed, with an eye toward passing legislation in the next Congress.

"It can't be the wild, wild west," Tillis said.

Tik

TIKTOK IS UNDER INVESTIGATION BY THE FTC OVER DATA PRACTICES AND COULD FACE A LAWSUIT



TRADE COMMISSION

The Federal Trade Commission is investigating TikTok over its data and security practices, a probe that could lead to a settlement or a lawsuit against the company, according to a person familiar with the matter.

The investigation is the latest battle in Washington for the social media company, which is already fighting against a federal bill that could ban the platform in the U.S. if it doesn't break ties with its Beijing-based parent company, ByteDance.

In its investigation, the FTC has been looking into whether TikTok violated a portion of federal law that prohibits "unfair and deceptive" business practices by denying that individuals in China had access to U.S. user data, said the person, who is not authorized to discuss the investigation.

The agency also is scrutinizing the company over potential violations of the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, which requires kid-oriented apps and websites to get parents' consent before collecting personal information of children under 13.

FTC spokesperson Nicole Drayton and TikTok declined to comment on the investigation, which was first reported by Politico.

The agency is nearing the conclusion of its investigation and could settle with TikTok in the coming weeks. But there's not a deadline for an agreement, the person said.

If the FTC moves forward with a lawsuit instead, it would have to refer the case to the Justice Department, which would have 45 days to decide whether it wants to file a case on the

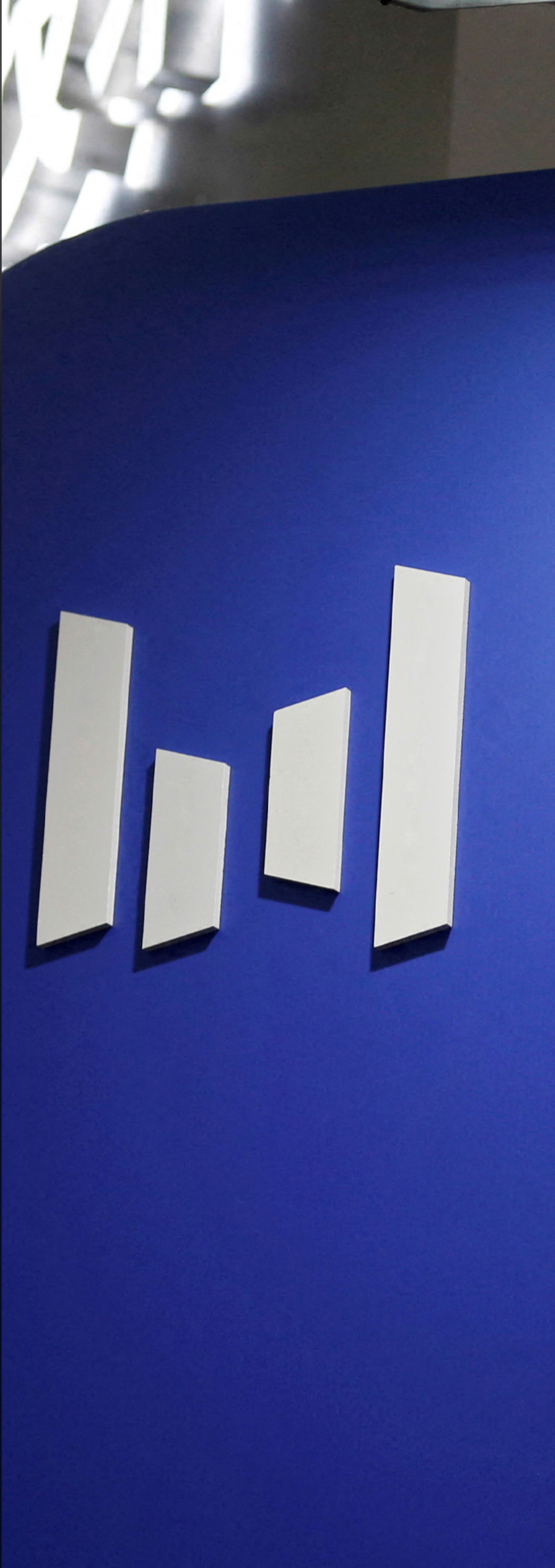
FTC's behalf, make changes or send it back to the agency to pursue on its own.

The news comes nearly two years after Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Mark Warner and Marco Rubio, the top Republican on the committee, urged FTC chair Lina Khan to investigate TikTok, citing a report from Buzzfeed News that said ByteDance employees in China have repeatedly accessed data on U.S. TikTok users.

In late 2022, ByteDance said it fired four employees who accessed data on journalists from Buzzfeed News and The Financial Times while attempting to track down leaks of confidential materials about the company.

Legislation that could determine TikTok's fate in the U.S. was approved in the House this month. But the bill has already run into roadblocks in the Senate, where there is little unanimity on how to best approach concerns over the social platform.

Lawmakers and intelligence officials have said they worry the platform could be used by the Chinese government to access U.S. user data or influence Americans through its popular algorithm. To date, the U.S. government hasn't provided public evidence that this has happened.



ByteDance
字节跳
头条

VISA, MASTERCARD SETTLE LONG-RUNNING ANTITRUST SUIT OVER SWIPE FEES WITH MERCHANTS

Visa and Mastercard announced a major settlement with U.S. merchants on Tuesday, potentially ending nearly two decades of litigation over the fees charged every time a credit or debit card is used in a store or restaurant.

The deal would lower and cap the fees charged by Visa and Mastercard and allow small businesses to collectively bargain for rates with

VISA
Signature
VISA
VIS

the payment processors in a similar way that the large merchants do on their own now.

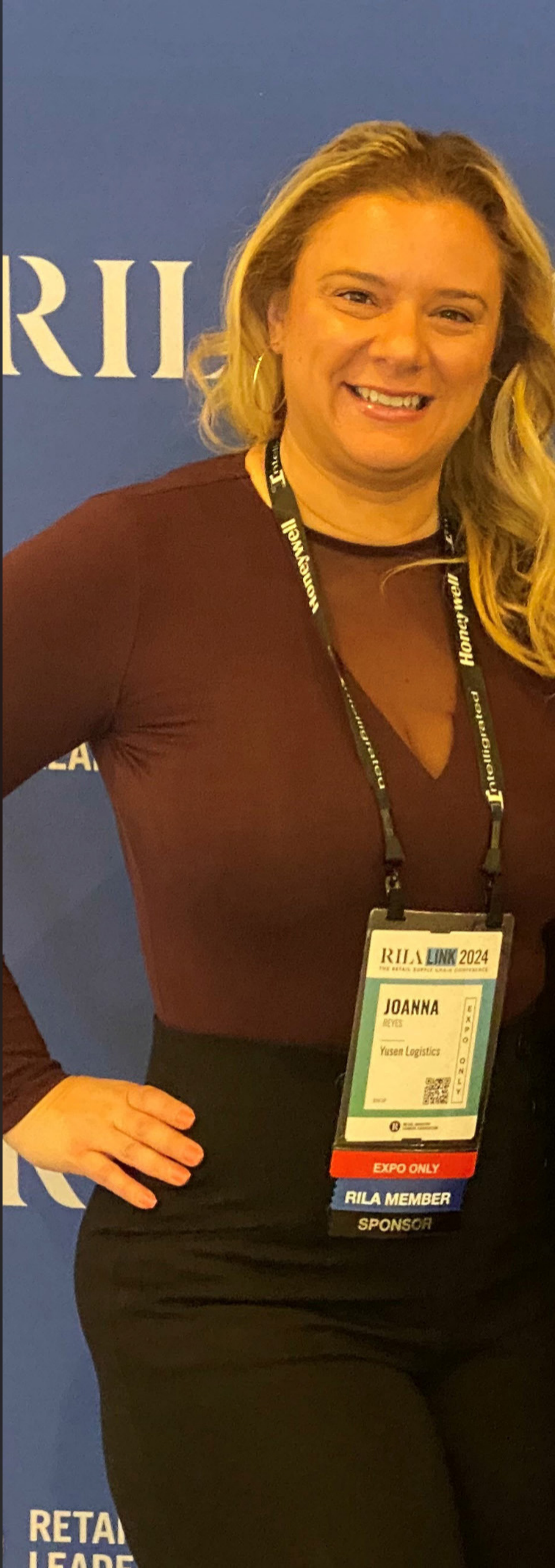
Industry groups for retailers both small and large said the settlement is a positive development, but far more needs to be done to remedy the current swipe-fee situation. They noted that the lowered fees would be only for a limited period of time — three to five years — after which the fees would return to their current levels.

“While this settlement is a step in the right direction and will provide a limited amount of short-term relief to small businesses, it does not solve the long-term anti-competitive rate-setting practices that are the root of this problem,” said Jeff Brabant, vice president of federal government relations at the National Federation of Independent Business, a small-business advocacy group. “As long as the credit card networks, Visa and Mastercard, get to set the interchange rates for every bank that issues a credit card, anti-competitive pricing will remain, and small businesses will continue to pay artificially high rates.”

Swipe fees are paid to Visa, Mastercard and other credit card companies in exchange for enabling transactions. Merchants ultimately pass on those fees to consumers who use credit or debit cards. The fees are calculated as a fixed fee plus a percentage of the sales total, typically about 1% to 3%.

Increasingly, small businesses have begun posting signs near the register warning customers that they will pay more for the same item if they do not use cash.

According to the settlement announced this week, Visa and Mastercard will cap the



RETAIL INDUSTRY LEADERS ASSOCIATION
RILA
RETAIL INDUSTRY LEADERS ASSOCIA
RILA
Honeywell
Intelligrated
Yusen Logistics
RILA LINK 2024
VIVIANA
Yusen Logistics
EXPO ONLY
RILA MEMBER
SPONSOR

credit interchange fees until 2030, and the companies must negotiate the fees with merchant-buying groups.

The law firm that announced the settlement put the value of the savings in swipe fees at close to $30 billion.

The settlement stems from a 2005 lawsuit that alleged merchants paid excessive fees to accept Visa and Mastercard credit cards, and that Visa and Mastercard and their member banks acted in violation of antitrust laws.

In 2018 Visa and Mastercard agreed to pay $6.2 billion as part of the long-running suit filed by a group of 19 merchants. But the lawsuit then had two pieces that needed to be resolved: a dispute over the rules Visa and Mastercard impose to accept their cards, and the merchants who chose not to participate in the settlement.

“This settlement is a mere drop in the bucket,” said the Retail Industry Leaders Association, a trade group representing Target, Home Depot and other major chains. “It proves that merchants deserve injunctive relief, but whether the settlement terms proposed are sufficient to remedy the harm caused by the current interchange system needs to be carefully reviewed.”

Mary Liz Curtin and her husband own two businesses, Leon & Lulu, a retail store in a converted vintage roller skating rink, and Three Cats Restaurant, a restaurant in a converted vintage movie theater, in Clawson, Michigan.

She said swipe fees have become a particular problem since the pandemic, when the use of cash plummeted. Most people use cards now,

cut

which means the roughly 3% swipe fee she pays eats up a lot more revenue than it used to.

"Like every retailer, our cash sales and check sales have plummeted because people are charging everything," Curtin said. "And that just means that there's a lovely slice of 3% off the top of all of your sales."

She welcomed the settlement.

"I am delighted in anything that will ameliorate the situation," she said. "I think this is going to help a little bit."

But she says swipe fees remain a "boondoggle."

Mike Roach, who co-owns Paloma Clothing with his wife in Portland, Oregon, said that once credit card mileage bonuses and other perks began to be the norm, card usage soared. He said swipe fees have been a significant cost of business -- before the pandemic, he calculated that there were some years his card fees were more than his (admittedly low) rent.

He said he thinks the settlement "isn't going to change anybody's bottom line by much," he said. "But it's a step in the right direction."

The settlement is in addition to a 2023 financial $5.54 billion settlement between Visa and Mastercard and 18 million businesses that accepted Visa or Mastercard during a 15-year period up to Jan. 25, 2019. Eligible merchants that received a claim form in the mail in December and January can claim a share of that settlement until May 31.

YOUR BRAND HAS NEVER BEEN IN SUCH GOOD COMPANY
ads@techlifenews.com
MindfieldDigital™

MASTHEAD

TECHLIFE NEWS INTERNATIONAL
TechLifeNewsMagazine.com

SOCIAL NETWORKS

X.com
@Techlife_News
x.com/#!/Techlife_News

Facebook
facebook.com/TechlifeNews

SUBSCRIPTIONS

TechLife News Website
techlifenewsmagazine.com

iTunes App Store™ / Newsstand
itunes.apple.com/app/techlife-news/id529054466?mt=8

CONTACTS

Executive Director - ceo@techlifenewsmagazine.com
Relationship Management - crm@techlifenewsmagazine.com
Editor - editor@techlifenewsmagazine.com
Advertise - ads@techlifenewsmagazine.com
Social Network - network@techlifenewsmagazine.com
Promotions - promo@techlifenewsmagazine.com

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ivan Castilho
Chief Executive Officer / Head of Design Conception

MINDFIELD DIGITAL ART & GRAPHIC DESIGN

Milene Mencari
Graphic Production Coordinator

Saulo Cardoso
Graphic Design Producer

Natielly Dias
Graphic Design Producer

Claudio Magalhaes
Graphic Design Producer

NEWS WEBSITE

Jack Crute
Newsroom Production

MAGAZINE EDITORIAL CONTENT

Benjamin Kerry
Chief Editor

WRITERS

Precise English Inc.
Gavin Lenaghan
Craig Lenaghan
Shanon O'Dovovan

COLUMNS

DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT REVIEW
Gavin Lenaghan

FINANCE NEWS
Associated Press / Bloomberg

REVISION

Gavin Lenaghan
Jack Crute

PRODUCTION SUPPORT / COLLABORATORS

Rui da Costa
Segolene Vincent
Fabian Groenhof
Lise Berda
James Jarvis
Richard Sawyer
Lauren Brown
Matthew Coburn
Jeffrey Milks
Susan Kiesling
Raquel Serrano
Robert Fluellen
Lisa Swiniarski
Roger Gayalkar

Icy Ventura
Pilar Bescos
Candice Liu
Sharnae Hughes
Saikumar B
Ryan Szloch
Ryan Szloch
Ciera Chang
Trevor Carroll
Oscar Garcia
Jenny Marry
Sierra Simon
Sharon Ferraro
Devesh Kamal

PRIVACY POLICY

techlifenewsmagazine.com/privacy-policy/

TERMS OF USE

techlifenewsmagazine.com/terms-of-use/

TECHLIFE NEWS© Copyright 2024-2012. All Rights Reserved.

No part of the document may be circulated, quoted, or reproduced for distribution without prior written approval. Proper Trademark Notice and Attribution iPad, iPhone, Apple Watch, AirPods, AirTag, HomePod, Mac, iMac, Macbook, iOS, iPadOS, macOS are trademarks of Apple Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries. Please contact support for additional trademark ownership rights information. The following is a list of Apple's trademarks and service marks http://www.apple.com/legal/ trademark/appletmlist.html. All other trademarks are the properties of their owners.

TechLife News is an independent publication and has not been authorized, sponsored, or otherwise approved by Apple Inc., Alphabet Inc., Google, Facebook, Microsoft Inc. or any other technology company or brand.

TechLife
NEWS

TechlifeNews.com